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# IRISH ODES

AND

OTHER POEMS.



BY

AUBREY DE VERE.

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TO  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

BY  
AUBREY DE VERE.



## PREFACE.



WISH has sometimes been expressed by my American friends that an edition of my poems should be published in their country. No one who has written in the English language, whether with the lower or the higher aims of literature, can fail to desire that his works should have a circulation in America. That country must ere long contain far the larger number of those who speak English ; in it, despite those material interests which imperiously demand the attention of a young country, poetry has already been produced with an abundance, and read with an eagerness, rare in the old world ; and it cannot be doubted that every liberal art must achieve new triumphs amid a race dowered with all that can develop moral and social energies, and naught that can depress intellect or divide

brethren. The Liberal Arts are the children of a virtuous, unboastful Liberty, frank-hearted, and not self-respecting alone, but full of respect for all that is human. Their larger growths are quickened from the soil of sympathies wide as the earth, and are freshened by aspirations not restrained to the earth. Like the spontaneous growths of Nature, they are also in part, it is true, Traditions ; but the allegation that America must wait long for a past, is an error. She has only to *remember*, as well as look forward, and the Past of all those nations from which her race is derived is her Past also.

For me the question is not merely one of Literature. There now exist in America more of my Irish fellow-countrymen than remain in their native country ; and I cannot but wish that my Poetry, much of which illustrates their History and Religion, should reach those Irish "of the dispersion" in that land which has extended to them its hospitality. Whoever loves that people must follow it in its wanderings with an earnest desire that, upon whatever shore the storms may have cast it, and by whatever institutions it may be cherished or proved, it may retain with vigilant fidelity, and

be valued for retaining, those among its characteristics which most belong to the Ireland of History and Religion. The Irish character is one easily mistaken by the "rough and ready" philosophy of the caricaturist. "A little part, and that the worst, he sees." To the rest he has not the key. Broad farce, and broad romance, have familiarized men with its coarser traits. Its finer reveal themselves to poetry. She deals with what lies beneath the surface. She makes her study, not of the tavern, but of the hill-side chapel, and of the cottage-hearth without stain and faithful to the departed. She ponders the tear-blotted letter, and the lip-worn rosary. In a face seldom joyless, but not seldom overcast, she finds something which makes her tread the wanderer's native land, and share with him the recollections of the Past. Those recollections, dear to all deep-hearted Races, but dearest to the saddest, have to the Irish been a reality in times when the present seemed a dream. But hitherto they have also been vindictive. Now that a Sectarian Ascendency is on the point of ceasing, they will lose their bitterness wherever the old and true Irish character remains. That character is generous where love is not curdled into hate by

wrong. To attain Civil Freedom and Religious Equality was long the task which nature and duty imposed upon Ireland. To develop, and rightly to direct the energies, moral, intellectual, and industrial, of a People set free, must ere long become the task of a thoughtful patriotism. These convictions will be traced in the poems which give the present volume its name, and occupy its earlier portion—poems written at various periods, but, like those in the latter part of the volume, not included in the writer's previous publications. The intermediate poems are a selection from his works.

It is sometimes said that the poetry of a Catholic, even when its subjects are, as in the present instance, mainly secular, should not expect an impartial audience in a country predominantly Protestant. The remark can hardly be one of universal application. Religious jealousies, now in most countries happily on the wane, are not produced by diversities of Faith; they are but social passions or panics—an after-swell bequeathed by the political tempests of past times. America, since she became a nation, has never persecuted, and therefore can afford to be just. Let it be for her to teach the world that true liberty—the liberty which



accords all that it demands—has no better friend than true Catholicity. The age is one of progress ; Catholicity has much that is in direct harmony with its furthest and hardest aspirations, and as much that is indirectly supplemental to them. It fears no progress that is not downward. It loves the people ; it sojourned with them in the Catacombs ; it delivered them from Pagan Imperialism, protected them from the Mahometan yoke, and struck from them the chains of Feudal serfdom. It rejoices in the expansion of their justly-regulated rights and powers, in which, as in a dilated breast, its free spirit respires with ease. But it also hallows Authority. It asserts Equality, not in the form of a surly and barren independence, but in that of a reciprocal dependence fruitful in mutual good. It emancipates us first from lawless passions, and next from those lawless tyrannies which are at once their offspring and their punishment ; but it works these marvellous works only because it pays and demands an allegiance based neither on a servile nor a selfish motive, and therefore unagrieved and unashamed. It generates a reverential good-will which, as by an inner law, subdues the aggressions of selfishness, and gives to each

man a protector in his neighbor ; but it at the same time takes from external laws its sting by creating the virtue of a proud and generous loyalty. That loyalty looks on the State not as a mere aggregate, the administrator of Society's material interests, but as the sacred unity of a nation, the majestic inheritor of its duties, the vindicator of a Divine Justice—nay, as, in its vastness and its permanence, a shadow of the Universal Church. Yet it remembers that to a loyal People the loyalty of the State is also due. We are made up of habits. Man requires both obedience and liberty : and it is where the priceless freedom of the heart is sustained by a willing and reasonable obedience in the spiritual sphere, that liberty, civil and social, can walk securely while steadied by the lightest yoke. In the Church History of 1800 years there needs little ingenuity to find some matter for reproach, and much for cavil. That period, however, during which the most devoted asserters of liberty have learned to confess that the Church was its surest friend, exceeds threefold the time during which they maintain that she acted but as a drag upon the wheels of progress. The road of Progress is a long road, and if on parts of it there

had been no drag, perhaps no wheels would have remained for that portion which lies open before the Intelligence of the Future.

We are sometimes told that, in our day, Poetry which does not affect the "sensational" must not hope to be popular. The "sensational" includes several schools, the worst of which is that one which is sensual as well as sensational. The fanatics of this school declaim about Passion; but they mean by the word little more than Appetite intellectualized. Far other was the meaning of Milton, when he described Poetry as a thing "simple, sensuous, and *impassioned*;" for it was he who characterized specially the stately and severe Greek Tragedy, as "high actions, and high *passions* best describing." Neither did he use the word "sensuous" in opposition to that lofty doctrine of Bacon, who affirms that Poetry "subjects the shews of things to the *desires* of the *mind*." Milton but intended thus to contrast Poetry with Science, which last has been well said to draw up the exterior universe into that of Thought and Law, whereas it is the office of Poetry to embody the interior world of Thought in palpable form. The great master of Inductive Phi-

losophy was, in this matter, Idealist ; while the great Idealist confessed, perhaps against the tenor of his habitual sympathies, the objective character of Poetry ; but these two authentic canons of criticism set forth but the same philosophy as regarded from two opposite points of view, the one insisting that the soul of Poetry is Thought, the other adding that for that soul a body exists also.

Let not the Sensationalists of this school imagine that Passion is their characteristic. It belongs to their narrow domain neither exclusively nor inclusively. True Passion finds its sustenance everywhere—in every joy and woe of humanity—in the faith and patience of oppressed nations, and the cry from the lonely hearth—in the

“sanguine flower inscribed with woe,”\*

and in the yew-grove,

“as if for festal purpose decked  
with *unrejoicing* berries.”†

False Passion, in its ultimate development, loathes all food but carrion, and destroys all that a sane heart reveres. It ignores the affections

\* Milton.

† Wordsworth.

and values the passions themselves but for the mud turned up by the storm. Its wit is maliciousness, and its humor but the pretext for license. It blots even from material nature her beauty ; for it abolishes, in its gross delineations, all her variety and harmony of expression, as well as all that gradation which metes and measures human enjoyment. Resolving all things into the senses, it stultifies the senses themselves, which for man have no true existence except in so far as they receive and give forth subordinately to man's higher Powers. It overruns whatever is fresh, and tramples down whatever is sweet. It rushes over God's world like a conflagration, licking up those innumerable half lights and half shades, precious alike in their reserve and their disclosures, through which the beauty of nature is rendered infinite, and her bounty inexhaustible. It leaves behind it nothing but blackness and barrenness. It may content itself with the suggestive, and conceal beneath the whitened outside of decorous language the implication that dares not be named ; or it may boast that it is natural, because it has renounced faith in the primary instincts of the moral nature, that it may celebrate animal in-

stincts in language that knows itself to be naked, and is not ashamed ; or it may endeavor to galvanize dead Art with the spasmodic tricks of spurious Science, exhibiting the malformations of depraved fancy, or of nature disnatured, in psychological poems and philosophic "Etudes," revolting as those anatomical eccentricities ranged round the walls of a museum :—to such achievements it may rise ; but it has forfeited all heritage in the two great homes of authentic poetry—man's heart and the universe of God. The sensual-sensational cannot plead the excuse of a tender weakness. It is essentially the heartless. In it the pathetic has no part. To feel anything it must have nails driven into it. In it love has no part ; for it has broken loose from that Reverence which is itself but Love shrouded beneath her sacred and protecting veil, and from that moral sense from which, and not from the animal nature or a blind caprice, the genuine human affections are outgrowths. In it the imagination has no part—that large and free imagination which aspires to breathe the spiritual into the material, not to merge the former in the latter. In her forest-

pleasaunce there remains not a tree that is not branded nor a spring that is not brackish.

Literary heresies, like religions, attract at first through their supposed originality. "Sensationalism" in this form—for I do not speak of those which offend only against refinement—fancies that it has discovered a new sort of "muscular" literature. It is new in nothing but the circumstances which aggravate the offence. The better time of Paganism itself was a reproach to the worst times of countries nominally Christian; and it was only when the higher genius of the ancient world had been blighted by bad morals and despotic Governments, that sensuality usurped upon its literature. Cast down from its Pagan throne, and remanded to the reptile form, it worked up again even in the ages of Faith, creeping back into the precinct made pure, and blending, in a half merry, half mystical libertinage, the higher thoughts of a chivalrous time with the renewed revolt of fallen nature. To what extent the corrupt element in the *Fabliaux*, *Tales*, and *Troubadour* songs of the Middle Ages defrauded the world of that complete Mediæval literature of which the "*Vita Nuova*" was the snowy bud, and the "*Divi-*



na Commedia" the half-opened flower, we shall probably never know; but what Dante did the writers of the "Novelle" undid, and in Chaucer's poetry a dark stream ran side by side with the clear one. For a long time a childlike Faith made head against a childish instability and inconsistency as to right and wrong; but by degrees the loftier element evaporated, while the coarser residuum remained behind. In ages of less simplicity the same evil has again and again recurred, marring the heroic strength of Elizabethan drama, scattering plague-spots over the dreary revel of Charles the Second, and in France pushing aside the Bossuets and Racines, and sealing a large part of literature, by its own confession, against the young and the innocent—that is, against those who, owing to their leisure, their vivid perceptions, quick sympathies, and unblunted sensibilities, can best appreciate what is beautiful, best profit by what is ennobling, and best reward, by innocence confirmed and noble enjoyments extended, the poet who has ever regarded *them* as his glory and his crown.

I have spoken, perhaps, at too great length of an evil which is yet but in an early stage amongst us.



But that evil is one which tends to advance. A busy age will need daily a noisier challenge ; and a luxurious age, weary of honest pleasures, will crave stronger stimulants. Nor may a friendly appeal be without value to some of our younger writers, whose genius is capable of better things than they suspect, and who are tempted to err into by-paths, not by any natural preference for them, but by paradox and precipitancy, by vanity, or by a despair of coping with the classic masters on the broad highways of literature. The true aspirant can never have cause for despair. Fail who may, Poetry will never lack fit men through whom to send her message to man. The false prophets may prophesy deceits ; but the true prophets will not cease to declare the vision or denounce the burthen. This volume records the name of several who in recent times have been true to their vocation ; fortunate if thus, at least, it may help to attract some hearts to that true kingdom of poetry of which such writers are the representatives, and thus to make atonement in some measure for its own defects.



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# POEMS.



## *ODE I.*

### THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

#### I.

HARK, hark that chime ! The frosts are o'er !

With song the birds force on the spring :

Thus, Ireland, sang thy bards of yore :—

O younger bards, 'tis time to sing !

Your Country's smile that with the past

Lay dead so long—that vanished smile—

Evoke it from the dark, and cast

Its light around a tearful isle !

#### II.

Like severed locks that keep their light

When all the stately frame is dust,

A Nation's songs preserve from blight

A Nation's name, their sacred trust.

Temple and pyramid eterne  
May memorize her deeds of power ;  
But only from the songs we learn  
How throbbed her life-blood, hour oy hour.

## III.

Thrice blest the strain that brings to one  
Who weeps, by some Australian rill,  
A worn out life far off begun,  
His Country's countenance beauteous still !  
That 'mid Canadian wilds, or where  
Rich-feathered birds are void of song,  
Wafts back, 'mid gusts of Irish air,  
Old wood-notes loved and lost so long !

## IV.

Well might the Muse at times forsake  
Her Grecian hill, and sit where swerve  
In lines like those of Hebé's neck,  
That wood-girt bay, yon meadow's curve,\*  
Watching the primrose clusters throw  
Their wan light o'er that ivied cave,  
And airs by myrtles odored blow  
The apple blossom on the wave !

## V.

Thrice blest the strain that, when the May  
Woos thus the young leaf from the bud,  
When robins, thrushlike, shake the spray,  
And deepening purples tinge the flood,

\* Foynes Island.



Kindles new worlds of love and truth,  
This world's lost Eden, still new-born,  
In breast of Irish maid or youth,  
Reading beneath the Irish thorn :

## VI.

That lures from over-heated strife  
Blinded ambition's tool; that o'er  
The fields of unsabbatic life  
The church-bells of the past can pour;  
Around the old oak lightning-scarred  
Can raise the virgin woods that rang  
When, throned 'mid listening kerns, the bard  
Of Oisín and of Patrick sang.

## VII.

Saturnian years return! Ere long  
Peace, justice-built, the Isle shall cheer:  
Even now old sounds of ancient wrong  
At distance roll, and come not near:  
Past is the iron age—the storms  
That lashed the worn cliff, shock on shock;  
The bird in tempest cradled warms  
At last her wings upon the rock.

## III.

How many a bard may lurk even now,  
Ireland, among thy noble poor!  
To Truth their genius let them vow,  
And scorn the Syren's tinsel lure;

Faithful to illustrate God's word  
On Nature writ ; or re-revealing,  
Through Nature, Christian lore transferred  
From faith to sight by songs heart-healing.

## IX.

Fair land ! the skill was thine of old  
Upon the illumined scroll to trace  
In heavenly blazon, blue or gold,  
The martyr's palm, the angel's face :  
One day on every Muse's page  
Be thine a saintly light to fling,  
And bathe the world's declining age  
Once more in its baptismal spring !

## X.

Man sows : a Hand Divine must reap :  
The toil wins most that wins not praise :  
Stones buried in oblivion's deep  
May help the destined pile to raise,  
Foundations fix for pier or arch ;  
Above that spirit-bridge's span  
To Faith's inviolate home may march,  
In God's good time, enfranchised man.

## SONNET.

SARSFIELD AND CLARE.

SILENT they slumber in the unwholesome shade :  
And why lament them ? Virtue, too, can die :  
Old wisdom labors in extremity ;  
And greatness stands aghast, and cries for aid  
Full often : aye, and honor grows dismayed ;  
And all those eagle hopes, so pure and high,  
Which soar aloft in youth's unclouded sky,  
Drop dustward, self-subverted, self-betrayed.  
Call it not joy to walk the immortal floor  
Of this exulting earth, nor peace to lie  
Where the thronged marbles awe the passer by :  
True rest is this ; the task, the mission o'er,  
To bide God's time, and man's neglect to bear—  
Hail, loyal Sarsfield ! Hail, high-hearted Clare !

## TO THE COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

WITH A COPY OF "INISFAIL."

YOUR spirit walks in halls of light :  
On earth you breathe its sunnier climes :  
How can an Irish muse invite  
Your fancy thus to sorrowing rhymes ?  
But you have fought the Church's fight !  
My Country's Cause and hers are one :  
And every Cause that rests on Right  
Invokes Religion's bravest son.

ODE II.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN.

I.

Ho ! ye that pace this way and that  
     In all your Sunday bravery,  
 That ask "What news?" that laugh and chat  
     Of Emperor, Pope, and slavery,  
 How name you yon cathedral hoar?  
     Who built it? Who endowed it?  
 Why kneel the natives there no more  
     While grooms and courtiers crowd it?

II.

One portion of its sacred trust  
     That pilè has ne'er discarded :  
 There Strongbow slumbers—tomb and dust  
     By well-fed vergers guarded :  
 But those who clasp the faith *they* held,  
     The invaders and the invaded,  
 Far off they kneel, a horde expelled,  
     An alien tribe degraded.

III.

From roof to roof the wind may run,  
     And shake the weeds close-shaven :  
 The javelin of the setting sun  
     May glance from tower to raven ;

*They* draw not nigh whose sires of old  
 Upraised yon frowning steeple,  
 God's chimes who rolled at midnight cold  
 Above a kneeling people !

IV.

A time there was when sheaf and blade,  
 From ocean on to ocean  
 Confessed their Faith and tribute paid  
 To ennoble their devotion :  
 Now on the wintry hills, scarce fed,  
 The Church's flocks are driven  
 From Achill's Isle to Brandon's Head,  
 Half shepherded, half shriven !

V

The Church ancestral sat in rags,  
 A thorny garland wearing :  
 The sons of Ireland's wastes and crags  
 For laws of man naught caring  
 Confessed, plain-voiced, whoe'er held sway,  
 King, Parliament, Protector,  
 Their Faith—that Faith which mounts to-day,  
 Above your Law-Church victor.

VI.

Law turned, to prop *that* Church, a wheel  
 Of omnipresent torture  
 With swifter, subtler, steadier zeal  
 Than lawless rage could nurture :

Keen scriveners—merchants, slow but fell—  
 Half buccaneers, half hedgers—  
 Old Shylock's knife they whetted well  
 Upon their dusty ledgers.\*

## VII.

Law banned the Book, the Trade, the Farm,  
 To prop your State-Church fiction :  
 Law stretched o'er shipless seas an arm  
 Of iron-bound restriction :  
 Law bribed the serf to hunt his Priest ;  
 Loosed wife and child from duty ;  
 But the People were true :—*that* Church possessed  
 Not them, but theirs, for booty.

## VIII.

Statesmen, that oft—old thrones o'erturned—  
 Of wrongs remote have ranted,  
 Has Pole, has Lombard ever mourned  
 Or Faith or Church supplanted ?  
 Take breath, avengers ! Nearer claims  
 Invoke your earlier favor ;  
 The Tiber cleanse not till the Thames  
 Sends up a healthier savor !

\* The war of chicane succeeded to that of arms and of hostile statutes ; and a regular series of operations was carried on, particularly from Chichester's time, in the ordinary courts of justice, and by special commissions and inquisitions, first, under pretence of tenures, and then of titles in the crown, for the purpose of the total extirpation of the interest of the natives in their own soil.—*Burke*, vol. vi. p. 336.

IX.

What voice is murmuring at mine ear,  
“We would, but are not able :  
“Right sides with Interest ;—yet we fear  
The zealot and the rabble.”  
Statesmen ! Church-heat is seldom meet  
For undogmatic laymen ;  
Go, treat us Papists as you treat  
Your Budhist and your Brahmin !

X.

How soon shall Freedom spurn the weight  
Of centuries dead and gory ?  
How long the eighth Henry maculate  
Victoria's grace and glory ?  
Against our honor and the Queen's  
We deem this mockery :—end it !  
Disloyal is the pen that screens,  
The bayonets that defend it !

XI.

Statesmen, look up ! 'Tis Truth makes bold !  
Three centuries burst their prison ;  
From the sealed Tomb the stone is rolled :  
The Truth that slept hath risen.  
Self caught in knots of serpent wiles  
Low lies the Equivocation ;  
And, o'er the ruin rising, smiles  
A liberated Nation !

SCOTLAND reveres her great Montrose,  
Scotland bewails her brave Dundee !  
With Alfred's memory England glows :—  
What lethal hemlock freezes thee,

My country, that thy trophies rise  
To noteless men, or men ill-famed,  
While they thy manlier destinies  
Who shaped, so long remain unnamed ?

The Dutchman strides his steed new-gilt  
In thy chief city's stateliest way ;  
The Kings thy monarchy who built,  
Or died to save it, where are they ?

Clontarf ! That Prince who smote the Dane,  
That Prince who raised a realm laid low—  
On thee what hath he ? Benburb's plain  
No record bears of Owen Roe !

Forgotten now as Nial and Conn  
Are those twin stars of Yellow-Ford  
Who freed Tyrconnell and Tyrone,  
Their country's altars who restored.

The man who feared no hireling's scoff,  
Thine Abdiel 'mid the apostate crew—  
Grattan !—his statue stands far off ;  
Berkeley wins late his laurels due.



Thy quarries have a barren womb,  
My country, or a monster birth !  
Belong they, statue, pillar, tomb,  
To vice alone or modern worth ?

Arise, and for thy proper weal  
Yield thy great Dead their honors late :  
Those only understand who feel  
How self-disfranchised are the ingrate !

*ODE III.*

## INDUSTRY.

## I.

FREE children of a land set free,  
A land late bound in fetters,  
Demand ye why your critic guest  
Scoffs oft in you his betters ?  
Nor race alone, nor creed to him  
Is stumbling-block, or scandal :  
Your rags offend ! he loathes in you  
Light purse and slipshod sandal.

## II.

His Virtue builds on Self-Respect :  
Upon that clay foundation,  
Nor rock nor sand, his trophies stand,  
The unit, and the nation.

Sad martyr of a finite Hope,  
Nor seeks he, nor attains he  
The all-heavenly prize. He toils for Earth ;  
But what he seeks that gains he.

## III.

Grasp ye, with ampler aim, that good  
His tragic creed o'erprizes :  
With loftier Mind revere in him  
The Will that energizes,  
The strong right hand, the lion heart,  
The industrial truth and valor :  
When comes reverse he too can die,  
But not in dirt and squalor.

## IV.

The natural Virtues yield to those  
Of heavenly birth affiance :  
O ye so strong in Faith, be strong  
In Truth and Self-Reliance !  
Strength, Justice, Prudence, Self-constraint !—  
Behold the four-square turret  
From which—a triad spire—should rise  
The Virtues of the Spirit !

## V.

Upon your brows the sunrise breaks :  
Then scorn the dirgeful ditty !  
Never, be sure, the heart was strong  
That dallied with self-pity.

Your Fathers' part was this—to bear—  
That plague they bore God stayeth :  
Be yours to act ! To manhood born,  
Be men ! “Who worketh, prayeth.”

## VI.

Son of the sorrowing Isle, her eyes  
Arraign thee for unkindness !  
Her shipless seas, her stagnant moors  
Accuse thy sloth or blindness.  
Set free her greatness—sing to her,  
New harvests waving round thee,  
“Thy son with golden robe hath girt,  
With golden crown hath crowned thee !”

## VII.

Young maid, that bend'st above thy wheel,  
So pure, so meek, so simple,  
The wool out-drawing as the smile  
Developes from the dimple,  
Smile on ! thou cloth'st thy country's feet,  
Those feet long bare and bleeding !  
Smile on ! thou send'st her Faith abroad  
With seemlier swiftness speeding !

## VIII.

Advance, victorious Years ! we land  
On solid shores and stable :  
Recede, dim seas, and painted cloud  
Of legend and of fable !

The Heroic Age returns. Of old  
 Men fought with spears and arrows :—  
 The sea-bank is the shield to-day :  
 The true knight drains and harrows !

*SONNET.*

THE IRISH CONSTITUTION OF 1782.

NOBLES of Ireland ! they your work arraign  
 That won your victory ! Lightning-like the thrill  
 Of Liberty speeds on ! O land, be still !  
 Your patriots toiled, your vales rejoice in vain.  
 “Our Nation wears no more the servile stain !  
 Our People turns no more the conqueror’s mill !”  
 Nation and People have ye none ! Your Will  
 Tyrannic knits anew the severed chain !\*  
 Nobles of Ireland that would fain be free  
 Set free your Irish Helots ! From that hour  
 Nation and People equalled shall ye stand  
 With England, side to side, or brand to brand !  
 Boast not till then a Freedom void of Power :  
 A laughing Devil mocks such Liberty !

\* The refusal of Parliamentary Reform, and of Catholic Emancipation, rendered the Irish Constitution of 1782 a nullity.

## ODE IV.

IRELAND'S CHURCH RIGHT AND ULSTER'S "TENANT RIGHT;" OR, THE IRISH CATHOLIC TO THE PROTESTANT OF THE NORTH.

[The "Tenant Right," sometimes called the "Old Custom" of Ulster, founds its claims to Compensation, Fixity of Tenure, etc., not on Statutes, but on Common Law, Prescription, and Usage—principles of which the stronghold has ever been that traditional Religion denounced by those who make their especial boast of "Protestant Ulster."]

## I.

STRONG Saxons of the dauntless North  
That jeer your Gaelic neighbors,  
And cleave your dark, ice-muffled earth  
With earlier, sturdier labors,  
Fierce Ulster's Tenants—scarce "at will"—  
That storm at "Landlord plunder,"  
And swear that from the fields you till  
No force your hands shall sunder:—

## II.

That toil in dream, that heap your hoards,  
That, sober-sad, or tipsy,  
Scourge Mother Earth, great guano-Lords,  
Still crying, "More, old gipsy!"  
And, like the Dutch, that "fished to shore"  
Through roaring waves the dry land,  
Dig, delve, and through the trench's door,  
Drag up a second island:—

## III.

Your world is Nature's world ! 'Tis well :  
Yet know there lives another,  
A world of ampler plain and dell,  
A kindlier, mightier Mother,  
A loftier sphere the *soul* that feeds,  
That sways with instincts finer  
And satisfies from deeper meads  
Necessities diviner.

## IV.

Faith rules that world ! 'Twas yours of old !  
Aye, ages following ages  
It teemed and reared the sacred mould  
Of patriot saints and sages :  
The Common Law of Christendom  
The common Right protected :  
The Church was heritage and home—  
Themselves your sires "ejected."

## V.

Truths richer than the Australian mine  
They spurned on Power's pretences :  
The Faith's celestial Discipline  
Gave way to legal fences :  
Amid a People's curses deep,  
Or silent execration,  
The men that readiest proved to creep  
Were pitch-forked into station.

VI.

Scorners of Statute Law, who hail  
 The ways traditionary,  
 What way found grace when Knox made pale  
 The royal cheek of Mary?  
 When Luther, windier still than Knox,  
 Proclaimed his Prophet mission,  
 And Nations veered like weather-cocks,  
 Say, where was then "Tradition"?

VII.

Sirs, there are storms far off that die  
 While near storms bruit and bluster!  
 You hear the falling roof-tree—I  
 The violated cloister!  
 When winter blasts through fanes stripped bare  
 First dashed, as still they dash on,  
 Was "Fixity of Tenure" there?  
 Where then was "Compensation"?

VIII.

Maintainers of the "Old Custom," learn  
 Old graves no more to trample!  
 Sad lyrists of the abandoned barn  
 Restore the ravished temple!  
 Base not old rights on novel wrong!  
 True Faith makes strong and true men:  
 Tyrone was true—Tyrconnel strong—  
 Ye transient are, and new men!

## IX.

None questions now King James' right,  
 Or Ulster's "young Plantation :"  
 Time heals with lenient touch, like light,  
 The scars of confiscation :  
 Old claims die out ; new rights succeed ;  
 Men learn content, or feign it ;  
 But Churches still live on, and bleed,  
 Demand redress, and gain it.

## X.

Ye know the weight of kine and corn,  
 The price of beans and vetches ;  
 Tell me what price a Nation torn  
 In twain by faction fetches ?  
 Be one ! 'Tis vain to storm or 'plain,  
 Till then, at "Landlord plunder :"  
 "Upper," till then, must rule and reign,  
 And "Under" still be under.

January, 1855.

## SONNET.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

WHAT man can check the aspiring life that thrills  
 And glows through all this multitudinous wood ;  
 That throbs in each minutest leaf and bud,  
 And, like a mighty wave ascending, fills  
 More high each day with flowers the encircling hills ?—  
 From earth's maternal heart her ancient blood  
 Mounts to her breast in milk ! her breath doth brood



O'er fields Spring-flushed round unimprisoned rills !  
Such life is also in the breast of Man ;  
Such blood is at the heart of every Nation,  
Not to be chained by Statesman's frown or ban.  
Hope and be strong : fear and be weak ! The seed  
Is sown : be ours the prosperous growth to feed  
With food, not poison—Christian Education !

## ODE V.

## THE BUILDING OF A COTTAGE.

## I.

LAY foundations deep and strong  
On the rock, and not the sand :  
Morn her sacred beam has flung  
O'er our ancient land.  
And the children through the heather  
Beaming joy from frank bright eyes,  
Dance along, and sing together  
Their loud ecstasies.  
Children, hallowed song to-day !  
Sing, aloud ; but, singing, pray !  
Orphic measures, proudly swelling,  
Lifted cities in old time :  
Build we now a humbler dwelling  
With a lowlier rhyme !  
Unless God the work sustain,  
Our toils are vain, and worse than vain :  
Better to roam for aye, than rest  
Under the impious shadow of a roof unblest !

## II.

Mix the mortar o'er and o'er,  
Holy music singing :  
Holy water o'er it pour,  
Flowers and tresses flinging :  
Bless we now the earthen floor :  
May good Angels love it !  
Bless we now the new-raised door :  
And that cell above it !  
Holy cell, and holy shrine  
For the Maid and Child divine !  
Remember thou that see'st her bending  
O'er that babe upon her knee,  
All Heaven is ever thus extending  
Its arms of love round thee !  
Such thought thy step make light and gay  
As yon elastic linden spray  
On the smooth air nimbly dancing—  
Thy spirits like the dew glittering thereon and  
glancing !

## III.

Castles stern in pride o'er-gazing  
Subject leagues of wolds and woods ;  
Palace fronts their fretwork raising  
'Mid luxurious solitudes ;  
These, through clouds their heads uplifting,  
The lightning challenge and invoke :  
His balance Power is ever shifting—  
The reed outlasts the oak.

Live, thou cottage ! live and flourish,  
Like a bank that spring showers nourish,  
Bright with field-flowers self-renewing,  
    Annual violets, dateless clover—  
Eyes of flesh thy beauty viewing  
    With a glance may pass it over ;  
But to eyes that wiser are  
Thou glitterest like the morning star ;  
And o'er wise hearts thy beauty breathes  
Such sweets as morn shall waft from those new-  
    planted wreaths !

## IV.

Our toils—not toils—are all but ended ;  
    The day has wandered by :  
Her gleams the rising moon has blended  
    With the azure of the sky :  
Yet still the sunset lights are ranging  
    On from mossy stem to stem ;  
Low winds, their odors vague exchanging,  
    Chaunt day's requiem.  
Upon the diamonded panes  
The crimson falls with fainter stains.  
More high in heavenward aspiration  
    The gables shoot their mystic lines :  
While now, supreme in grace as station,  
    The tower-like chimney shines.  
An altar stands that tower beneath :  
Pure be its flame in life and death !  
Now westward point the archéd porch—  
Crown with a Cross the whole—our cot becomes  
    a Church !

## V.

Kings of the Earth ! too frail, too small  
This straw-roofed tenement for you ?  
Then lo ! from Heaven my song shall call  
A statelier retinue !  
They come, the twilight ether cheering,  
(Not vain the suppliant song, not vain,)  
Our earth on golden platform nearing :  
On us their crowns they rain !  
Like Gods they stand, the portal  
Lighting with looks immortal !  
Faith, on her chalice gazing deep ;  
And Justice with uplifted scale ;  
Meek Reverence ; pure, undreaming Sleep ;  
Valor in diamond mail !  
There, Hope with vernal wreath ; hard by  
Indulgent Love ; keen Purity ;  
And Truth, with radiant forehead bare ;  
And Mirth, whose ringing laughter triumphs o'er  
Despair.

## VI.

Breathe low : stand mute in reverent trance !  
Those Potentates their mighty eyes  
Have fixed ! Right well that piercing glance  
Roof, wall, and basement tries !  
Foundations few that gaze can meet :  
Therefore the Virtues stay with few :  
But where they once have fixed their seat,  
Her home Heaven fixes too !

They enter now with awful grace  
Their dedicated dwelling place :  
In tones majestic yet tender  
They chaunt their consecration hymn,  
From jewelled breasts a sacred splendor  
Heaving through shadows dim.  
The Rite is done : the seed is sown :  
Leave, each his offering, and be gone !  
Stay, ye for whom were raised these walls—  
Possession God hath ta'en ; and now His guests  
He calls.

ODE VI.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY.

I.

THE Land, how lies she cold and dead,  
When on her brow long since  
Freedom its virtuous radiance shed,  
And drove the darkness thence ?  
The child at her its stone may fling ;  
The dragon-fly her cheek may sting—  
“ Ho ! murdered was she, or self-slain,  
This bulk with blackness in the brain ? ”

II.

'Tis past ! the Realm has learned its want :  
The Nation wills its work :  
Her eastern skies with lustre pant,  
Vacant till now and murk :

She swears with heavenly Faith to join  
 The manly mind, the fixed design,  
 The mastering knowledge—public heart—  
 The nature crowned, not quenched by art.

## III.

'Twas in a dolorous hour, 'twas then  
 When Famine plagued our coast,  
 And Penal Law,\* let loose again,  
 Trod feebly like a ghost  
 The land he once had stamped in blood,  
 'Twas then her need we understood:  
 'Twas then her Genius from a cloud  
 Looked forth and cried to us aloud!

## IV.

The People heard; and, far and wide,  
 Like some long clarion blast,  
 By town, and plain, and mountain side  
 The inspiring Mandate passed:  
 His children's crust the peasant shared  
 With him that brought the news, and bared  
 A hearth already blank to aid  
 That great emprise so long delayed.

## V.

In Glendalough's green vale, and where  
 The skylark sings o'er Lee,  
 Once more her domes shall Wisdom rear,  
 And house the brave and free;

\* The Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 1851.

From Cashel's rock, th' old Minster fane  
Shall laugh in light o'er Thomond's plain ;  
Grey Arran pierce the sea-fog's gloom ;  
Kildare her vestal lamp relume.

VI.

Where Shannon sweeps by lost Athlone  
To Limerick's Castle walls  
New college choirs the river's moan  
Shall tune at intervals ;  
By kingly Clonmacnoise, and Cong,  
Fresh notes shall burst of olden song,  
And by that wave-washed northern shore,  
Whereon they toiled—those "Masters Four."

VII.

They toiled and toiled till sank the night :  
They toiled till aching morn  
Through mist of breakers rose with light  
Uncertain and forlorn :  
Their country's Present overcast,  
They vowed thus much should live—her Past !  
A beam o'er graves heroic shed,  
And haunt with dreams the Oppressor's bed.

VIII.

Lo ! where we stand, one day shall spread  
Cloisters like branching wood :  
On the great Founder's sculptured head\*  
Our Irish sunshine brood !

\* Dr. Newman.

I see the fountains gem the grass ;  
 Through murmuring courts the red gown pass ;  
 Religion's pageant, and the vaunt  
 Of Learning mailed and militant.

## IX.

I see, entombed in marble state,  
     Roderick—O'More—Red Hugh ;  
 The two crowned Mourners\*—wise too late—  
     Their tardy wisdom rue :  
 I see the Martyrs of old time ;  
 The warriors hymned in Irish rhyme ;  
 And Burke and Grattan, just in deed,  
 Though nurslings of an alien creed.

## X.

The vision deepens : tower-cast shades  
     With sunset longer grow :  
 High ranged round airy colonnades  
     Fronting that western glow,  
 Lean out stone Patrons, veiled all day,  
 But vast at eve against the grey,  
 Like those great Hopes that o'er us shine  
 Distinctest in our life's decline.

## XI.

'Tis night : the dusk arcades between  
     Glimmers, O Derg, thy Lake !  
 The May moon o'er it trails serene  
     Her silver-woven wake :

\* Charles I. and James II.



What songs are those? Each boat has crossed  
Half-way that radiance—and is lost,  
Returning from the ivied pile  
That hallows Iniscaltra's Isle.

XII.

The moon is set, and all is dark,  
Yet still those oars keep time:  
The great clock shakes the courts, and hark,  
That many-steepled chime!  
From college on to college roll  
The peals o'er creek and woody knoll!—  
My Country, *will* it! Fancy's store  
Is rich: yet Faith can grant thee more!

SONNET.

WRITTEN IN CUMBERLAND, SEPT. 1860.

LAUREATES of Freedom o'er these hills sublime  
That stride and ask, "What news? What tyrant's fall  
Draws out to-day, in ruin musical,  
The storm-stop of an else monotonous chime?"  
The news is this—strange news in prose or rhyme—  
They that redeemed this land, then Satan's thrall,  
To Christ, were Ireland's sons! Iona's call  
Your fathers spurned not in Faith's happy prime!\*

\* See the Count de Montalembert's noble work, "The Monks of the West."

To-day the sons of Ireland, far and near,  
Amerced of altar, priest, and sacrifice,  
Like the blind laboring horse or harnessed steer,  
Sweat in your fields! I speak where none replies  
Calm as a sceptic's smile still shines the sun:  
The slowly sailing cloud sails slowly on!

*ODE VII.*

*AFTER ONE OF THE FAMINE YEARS.*

I.

THE golden dome, the Tyrian dye,  
And all that yearning ocean  
Yields from red caves to glorify  
Ambition, or devotion—  
I leave them—leave the bank of Seine,  
And those high towers that shade it,  
To tread my native fields again,  
And muse on glories faded.

II.

The monumental city stands  
Around me in its vastness,  
Girdling the spoils of all the lands  
In war's imperial fastness.  
That stony scroll of every clime  
Some record boasts or sample;  
Cathedral piles of oldest time,  
Huge arch and pillared temple.

## III.

They charge across the field of Mars ;  
The earth beneath them shaking  
As breaks a rocket into stars  
The columned host is breaking :  
It forms : it bursts :—new hosts succeed :  
They sweep the Tuileries under :  
The thunder from the Invalides  
Answers the people's thunder.

## IV.

Behold ! my heart is elsewhere,  
My soul these pageants cheer not :  
A cry from famished vales I hear,  
That cry which others hear not.  
Sad eyes, as of a noontide ghost,  
Whose grief, not grace, first won me,  
'Mid regal pomps ye haunt me most :—  
There most your power is on me.

## V.

Last night, what time the convent shades,  
Far-stretched, the pavement darkened  
Where rose but late the barricades  
Alone I stood, and hearkened ;  
Thy dove-note, O my country, thine,  
In long-drawn modulation,  
Went by me, linked with words divine  
That stayed all earthly passion !

## VI.

A man entranced, and yet scarce sad,  
Since then I see in vision  
The scenes whereof my boyhood had  
Possession, not fruition.  
Dark shadows sweep the landscape o'er,  
Each other still pursuing ;  
And lights from sinking suns once more  
Grow golden on the ruin.

## VII.

Dark violet hills extend their chains  
Athwart the saffron even,  
Pure purple stains not distant plains :  
And earth is mixed with heaven :  
One cloud o'er half the sunset broods ;  
And from its ragged edges  
The wine-black shower descends like floods  
Down dashed from diamond ledges.

## VIII.

Through rifted fanes the damp wind sweeps,  
Chanting a dreary psalter :  
I see the bones that rise in heaps  
Where rose of old the altar ;  
Once more beside the blessed well  
I see the cripple kneeling :  
I hear the broken chapel bell  
Where organs once were pealing.

## IX.

I come, and bring not help, for God  
Withdraws not yet the chalice :  
Still on your plains by martyrs trod  
And o'er your hills and valleys,  
His name a suffering Saviour writes—  
Letters black-drawn, and graven  
On lowly huts, and castled heights,  
Dim haunts of newt and raven.

## X.

I come, and bring not song ; for why  
Should grief from fancy borrow ?  
Why should a lute prolong a sigh,  
Sophisticating sorrow ?  
Dull opiates, down ! To wind and wave,  
Lethæan weeds I fling you :  
Anacreontics of the grave,  
Not mine the heart to sing you !

## XI.

I come the breath of sighs to breathe,  
Yet add not unto sighing  
To kneel on graves, yet drop no wreath  
On those in darkness lying.  
Sleep, chaste and true, a little while,  
The Saviour's flock, and Mary's :  
And guard their reliques well, O Isle,  
Thou chief of reliquaries !

## XII.

Blessed are they that claim no part  
In this world's pomp and laughter :  
Blessed the pure ; the meek of heart :—  
Blest here ; more blest hereafter.  
“Blessed the mourners.” Earthly goods  
Are woes, the Master preaches :—  
Embrace thy sad beatitudes,  
And recognize thy riches !

## XIII.

And if, of every land the guest,  
Thine exile back returning  
Finds still one land unlike the rest,  
Discrowned, disgraced, and mourning,  
Give thanks ! Thy flowers, to yonder skies  
Transferred, pure airs are tasting ;  
And, stone by stone, thy temples rise  
In regions everlasting.

## XIV.

Sleep well, unsung by idle rhymes,  
Ye sufferers late and lowly ;  
Ye saints and seers of earlier times,  
Sleep well in cloisters holy !  
Above your bed the bramble bends,  
The yew tree and the alder :  
Sleep well, O fathers, and O friends,  
And in your silence moulder !

## SONNET.

## TRUE AND FALSE LOVE OF FREEDOM.

THEY that for freedom feel not love but lust,  
 Irreverent, knowing not her spiritual claim,  
 And they, the votaries blind of windy fame,  
 And they who cry "I will because I must,"  
 They too that launch, screened by her shield august,  
 A bandit's shaft, some private mark their aim,  
 And they that make her sacred cause their game  
 From restlessness or spleen or sheer disgust  
 At duteous days ;—all these, the brood of night,  
 Diverse, by one black note detected stand,  
 Their scorn of every barrier raised by Right  
 To awe self-will. Howe'er by virtue bann'd,  
 By reason spurn'd, that act the moment needs  
 Licensed they deem ;—holy whate'er succeeds.

## SONNET.

ROMANS, that lift to Liberty, your God,  
 Not vows, but swords, suppliants self-deified,  
 Betwixt her altars and your rock of pride  
 A stream there rolls fiercer than Alpine flood,  
 A fatal stream of murder'd Rossi's blood !\*  
 For Liberty he lived ; and when he died,  
 Prisoner, that new Rienzi's corse beside,  
 The King, the Pontiff, and the Father stood !

\* Such deeds as the murders of Rossi, of Lincoln, and of Thomas D'Arcy McGee remind us sadly of O'Connell's reiterated warning :  
 " He who commits a crime is the *enemy of his country*."

What rite piacular from that impious deed  
Hath cleansed your hands? Accuse not adverse stars  
If guilt unwept achieve not virtue's meed.  
Years heal not treason. All his sands old Time  
Shakes down to keep unblurr'd those characters  
Wherein are traced the calendars of crime.

ODE VIII.

THE DESOLATION OF THE WEST.

"Migravit Judah propter afflictionem."

I.

DAY after day, mile after mile,  
I roamed a land that knew no smile  
With awe akin to dread :  
The land remained : the hills were there :  
The vales—but few remained to share  
That realm untenanted.

II.

Far-circling wastes, far-bending skies,  
Clouds as at Nature's obsequies  
Slow trailing scarf and pall :—  
In whistling winds on creaked the crane :  
Grey lakes upstared from moor and plain  
Like eyes on God that call.



## III.

Above the hoary main a bluff  
Rose with unnumbered gables rough  
Beneath a sky of lead :  
Nearer I drew : the tale was told !  
Grim, roofless walls, and hearths long cold ;—  
The villagers were dead.

## IV.

That race of old from Ulster driven  
Once more—for ocean—or for heaven—  
Had rushed o'er Connaught's bound :  
Void were the homes : the churchyards full :  
Ten years had passed ; and many a skull  
Whitened the churchyard ground.

## V.

Turn where I might, no blade of green  
Diversified the tawny scene :  
Bushless the waste, and bare :  
A dusky red the hills, as though  
Some deluge ebbing years ago  
Had left but sea-weed there.

## VI.

Dark red the vales : that single hue  
O'er rotting swamps an aspect threw  
Monotonous yet grand :  
Long feared—for centuries in decay—  
Like a maimed lion there it lay,  
What once had been a Land.

## VII.

Yet, day by day, as dropt the sun,  
A furnace glare through vapors dun  
    Illumed each mountain's head :  
Old tower and keep their crowns of flame  
That hour assumed ; old years of shame  
    Like fiends exorcised, fled.

## VIII.

That hour, from sorrow's trance awaking,  
My soul, like day from darkness breaking,  
    With might prophetic fired,  
To those red hills and setting suns  
Returned antiphonal response,  
    As gleam by gleam expired.

## IX.

And in my spirit grew and gathered  
Knowledge that Ireland's worst was weathered,  
    Her last dread penance paid ;  
Conviction that for earthly scath  
In world-wide victories of her Faith  
    Atonement should be made.

## X.

Well rose to heaven the hosts who there  
Upbuild the omnipotence of prayer  
    O'er depths of vanquished grief !  
Well breasted they the billows drear  
A western Ireland who uprear  
    Like some slow coral reef !

XI.

Thus musing, in remoter vision  
Of God's "New Heavens" I had fruition,  
And saw, and inly burned :  
And I beheld the multitude  
Of those whose robes were washed in blood,  
Saw chains to sceptres turned !

XII.

And I saw Thrones, and Seers thereon  
Judging, and Tribes like snow that shone,  
And diamond towers high-piled,  
Towers of that City theirs at last,  
Through tribulations who have passed,  
And theirs, the undefiled.

• XIII.

A Land become a Monument !  
Man works ; but God's concealed intent  
Converts his worst to best.  
The first of Altars was a Tomb—  
Ireland ! thy grave-stone shall become  
God's Altar in the West !

December 12, 1860.

## ODE IX.

## AGAINST FALSE FREEDOM.

## I.

THE Nations have their parts assign'd :  
The deaf one watches for the blind :  
The blind for him that hears not hears :  
Harmonious as the heavenly spheres  
Despite their outward fret and jar  
Their mutual ministrations are.  
Some shine on history's earlier page ;  
Some prop the world's declining age :  
One, one reserves her buried bloom  
To flower-perchance on Winter's tomb.

## II.

Greece, weak of Will but strong in Thought,  
To Rome her arts and science brought :—  
Rome, strong yet barbarous, gain'd from her  
A staff, but, like Saint Christopher,  
Knew not for whom his strength to use,  
What yoke to bear, what master choose.  
His neck the giant bent !—thereon  
The Babe of Bethlehem sat ! Anon  
That staff his prop, that sacred freight  
His guide, he waded through the strait,  
And enter'd at a new world's gate.

III.

On that new stage were played once more  
 The parts in Greece rehearsed before :  
 Round fame's Olympic stadium vast  
 The new-born, emulous Nations raced ;  
 Now Spain, now France the headship won  
 (Unrisen the Russian Macedon):  
 But naught, O Ireland, like to thee  
 Hath been! A Sphinx-like mystery,  
 At the world's feast thou sat'st death-pale ;  
 And blood-stains tinged thy sable veil.

IV.

Apostle, first, of worlds unseen!  
 For ages, then, deject and mean :—  
 Be sure, sad land, a concord lay  
 Between thy darkness and thy day!  
 Thy hand, had temporal gifts been thine,  
 Had lost, perchance, the things divine.  
 Truth's witness sole! The insurgent North  
 Gave way when falsehood's flood went forth  
 On the scarr'd coasts deform'd and cleft  
 Thou, like the Church's Rock, wert left!

V.

That Tudor tyranny which stood  
 'Mid wrecks of Faith, was quench'd in blood  
 When Charles, its child and victim, lay  
 The Rebel-Prophet's bleeding prey.

Once more the destined wheel goes round !  
Heads royal long are half discrown'd :  
Ancestral rights decline and die :—  
Thus Despotism and Anarchy  
Alternate each the other chase,  
Twin Bacchantes wreathed around one vase.

## VI.

The future sleeps in night : but thou  
O Island of the branded brow,  
Her flatteries scorn who rear'd by Seine  
Fraternity's ensanguined reign,  
And for a sceptre twice abhorr'd  
Twice welcomed the Cesarian sword—  
Thy past, thy hopes, are thine alone !  
Though crush'd around thee and o'erthrown,  
The majesty of civil might  
The hierarchy of social right  
Firm state in thee for ever hold !  
Religion was their life and mould.

## VII.

The vulgar, dog-like eye can see  
Only the ignobler traits in thee ;  
Quaint follies of a fleeting time ;  
Dark reliques of the oppressor's crime.  
The Seer—what sees he ? What the West  
Has ne'er except in thee possess'd ;  
The childlike Faith, the Will like fate,  
And that Theistic Instinct great  
New worlds that summons from the abyss  
“The balance to redress of this.”

## VIII.

Wait thou the end ; and spurn the while  
False Freedom's meretricious smile !  
Stoop not thy front to anticipate  
A triumph certain ! Watch and wait !  
The schismatic, by birth akin  
To Socialist and Jacobin,  
Will claim, when shift the scales of power,  
His natural place. Be thine that hour  
With good his evil to requite ;  
To save him in his own despite ;  
And backward scare the brood of night !

## SONNET.

## THE ECCLESIASTICAL TITLES ACT.

THE statesmen of this day I deem a tribe  
That dwarf-like strut, a pageant on a stage  
Theirs but in pomp and outward equipage,  
Ruled inly by the herd, or hireling scribe.  
They have this skill, the dreaded Power to bribe :  
This courage, war upon the weak to wage :  
To turn from self a Nation's ignorant rage :  
To unstaunch old wounds with edict or with jibe.  
Ireland ! The unwise one saw thee in the dust,  
Crowned with eclipse, and garmented with night,

And in his heart he said, "For her no day!"  
 But thou long since hadst placed in God thy trust,  
 And knew'st that in the under-world, all light,  
 Thy sun moved eastward. Watch! that East  
                  grows grey!

*ODE X.*

*AN IRISH "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN."*

I.

God save the Queen! A widowed land  
     May bless a Widow keeping  
 Beside a grave her faithful stand,  
     Long watching, and late weeping:  
 Well versed in woes, that land may pray,  
     "While the great night draws nearer,  
 Lady, may stars unseen by day  
     For thee grow clear and clearer!"

II.

God save the Queen, and drive far off  
     Each whisperer—clown or noble—  
 That dares her People's Faith to scoff,  
     Her People's peace to trouble;  
 Rebuke bad laws that bar with gloom  
     Her empire's rifted centre,  
 And freeze its Eden to a tomb—  
     A many-centuried winter.



## III.

God save the Queen ! His Strength, His Right  
 Keep well :—they long have kept her !  
 All majesties of Love and Might  
 Like eaglets haunt her sceptre !  
 Be hers a Realm for virtue praised,  
 Not wealth alone ; a Nation  
 Aloft in all its Orders raised,  
 With just and wise gradation.

## IV.

God save the Queen ! Let flatterers run  
 To hail the rising splendor :  
 To *her* more dear the sinking sun,  
 That Island true and tender !  
 She that fought last for Charles—for James—  
 Will yield more generous duty  
 To Virtue's grace, and Sorrow's claims  
 Than all thy new-crowned beauty !

## V.

God save the Queen ! The land that weeps  
 Her children fled or flying,  
 That, age by age, on carnage heaps  
 Beheld her princes lying,  
 That land, O royal Mother, prays,  
 Thy children round thee pressing,  
 May crown thy dimmed, autumnal days,  
 With glory and with blessing.

## VI.

God save the Queen ! From Chiefs of yore  
 Who left for Alba's mountains  
 Dalriad Ireland's northern shore,\*  
 Her life-blood tracks its fountains :—  
 Ring out, strong voices, and be glad !  
 Make answer, tower and steeple !  
 God save the Queen ! But let her add  
*Her* prayer, "God save my People !"

PROLOGUE TO CARDINAL WISEMAN'S  
 "HIDDEN GEM."

FOUNDED ON THE LEGEND OF ST. ALEXIUS, AND  
 ACTED BY THE PUPILS AT THE CISTERCIAN ABBEY  
 OF MOUNT MELLERAY, WATERFORD, ON THE FEAST  
 OF THE TRANSFIGURATION, 1863.

WHAT man is this, the poorest of the poor,  
 Who stands in rags beside a princely door ?  
 Sea-surf, and winds that pipe o'er moorlands bleak  
 Have made a rude acquaintance with his cheek ;  
 But from his eye looks forth a quenchless light,  
 Radiance of realms eterne and infinite !  
 He asks a boon :—like one of royal race,  
 That boon demands—the *lowliest* resting place !

\* See Sir Walter Scott's History of Scotland.

Round him rich marbles gleam, proud bondsmen  
    laugh

Like idiots gibbering o'er an epitaph :

To him a palace yields a Hermit's grot :

He to his own has come ; they know him not.

What man is this that from his pallet bed

Sends up that awful mandate from the Dead ?

O'er the cold corse who weeps ? No more beguiled

The Father's heart turns, clamorous, to the Child :

Great Rome is troubled : mute on either hand

A Pontiff, and an Emperor wondering stand :

But Truth shines clear at last through transient gloom ;

And Love, Truth's martyr, conquers from the tomb.

Lo ! this is he at God's command who spurned

The earth, and heaven's high lore through suffering  
    learned.

Fortune, that, queen-like, glittered at his side,

He fled, and Poverty embraced—his Bride.

Good Deeds his children were ; Wisdom his crown ;

His sceptre this, to rule one heart—his own.

Man's Race had moulted long its spirit-wings

Through gross and lavish use of lawful things,

Not less than things unlawful. As a sign

God raised this Witness for the things divine.

A greater light puts out, or dims, a less :

He fled from loves that innocently bless

In Heavenly Love's severe, yet sweet excess.

High is our theme ! not Passion's feverish strife ;  
Not Fate at noon eclipsing Love and Life ;  
But Strength heroic by a path austere  
Ascending darkly to a loftier sphere.  
For once religious is a classic Muse :  
But who could here a Pagan hero choose,  
Here, where in regions desert, late, and lorn  
Once more the Angelus attunes the morn,  
Where Compline-Psalm, and Nocturn's wakeful Rite  
Close and unclothe with song the gates of night,  
Where Benedict and Bernard's long-linked line  
Respond to anthems from Mount Aventine ?\*  
O Thou, our Nurse ! High Mother of our spirits !  
Strong Prophet of that kingdom Faith inherits ;  
With garb ascetic and perpetual Lent  
A Baptist, crying to the World, "Repent !"   
Yet inly clad with sun-like splendor ! We  
That beam transfiguring recognize in thee !  
Our Theme art *thou* ! The legend comes from  
Rome :—  
We found Alexius in our Irish home !

\* The Church of St. Alexius stands on the Aventine.

## TO BURNS'S "HIGHLAND MARY."

## I.

O LOVED by him whom Scotland loves,  
Long loved, and honored duly  
By all who love the bard who sang  
So sweetly and so truly !  
In cultured dales his song prevails ;  
Thrills o'er the eagle's æry—  
Who, who that strain has caught, nor sighed  
For Burns's "Highland Mary" ?

## II.

His golden hours of youth were thine ;  
Those hours whose flight is fleetest :  
Of all his songs to thee he gave  
The freshest and the sweetest.  
Ere ripe the fruit, one branch he brake,  
Snow-white with bursting blossom ;  
And shook its dews, its incense shook,  
Above thy brow and bosom !

## III.

And when his Spring, alas, how soon !  
Had been by care subverted,  
His Summer, like a god repulsed,  
Had from his gates departed

Beneath the evening star, once more,  
Star of his morn and even !  
To thee his suppliant hands he spread,  
And hailed his love "in heaven."

## IV.

And if his being in "a waste  
Of shame" too oft was squandered,  
And if too oft his feet ill-starred  
In ways erroneous wandered,  
Ah ! still his spirit's spirit bathed  
In purity eternal ;  
And all fair things through thee retained  
For him their aspect vernal !

## V.

Nor less that tenderness remained  
Thy favoring love implanted ;  
Compunctious pity, yearnings vague  
For love to earth not granted ;  
Reserve with freedom, female grace  
Well matched with manly vigor  
In songs where fancy twined her wreaths  
Round judgment's stalwart rigor.

## VI.

A mute but strong appeal was made  
To him by feeblest creatures :  
In his large heart had each a part  
That part had found in Nature's :

The wildered sheep, sagacious dog,  
Old horse reduced and crazy,  
The field-mouse by the plough upturned,  
And violated daisy.

## VII.

In him there burned that passionate glow,  
All Nature's soul and savor,  
Which gives its hue to every flower,  
To every fruit its flavor :  
Nor less the kindred power he felt ;  
That love of all things human  
Whereof the fiery centre is  
The love man bears to woman.

## VIII.

He sang the dignity of man,  
Sang woman's grace and goodness ;  
Passed by the world's half-truths, her lies  
Pierced through with lance-like shrewdness.  
Upon life's broad highways he stood,  
And aped nor Greek nor Roman ;  
But snatched from heaven Promethean fire  
To glorify things common.

## IX.

He sang of youth, he sang of age,  
Their joys, their griefs, their labors ;  
Felt with, not for, the people, hailed  
All Scotland's sons his neighbors :

And therefore all repeat his verse—  
Hot youth, or graybeard steady,  
The boatman on Loch Etive's wave,  
The shepherd on Ben Ledi.

## X.

He sang from love of song ; his name  
Dunedin's cliff resounded :—  
He left her, faithful to a fame  
On truth and nature founded.  
He sought true fame, not loud acclaim ;  
Himself and Time he trusted :  
For laurels crackling in the flame  
His fine ear never lusted !

## XI.

He loved, and reason had to love,  
The illustrious land that bore him :  
Where'er he went, like heaven's broad tent  
A star-bright Past hung o'er him.  
Each isle had fenced a saint recluse,  
Each tower a hero dying ;  
Down every mountain-gorge had rolled  
The flood of foemen flying.

## XII.

From age to age that land has paid  
No alien throne submission ;  
For feudal faith had been her Law,  
And Freedom her Tradition.



Where frowned the rocks had Freedom smiled,  
Sung, 'mid the shrill wind's whistle—  
So England prized her garden Rose,  
But Scotland loved her Thistle.

## XIII.

Fair field alone the brave demand,  
And Scotland ne'er had lost it:  
And honest prove the hate and love  
To objects meet adjusted.  
Her will and way had ne'er been crossed  
In fatal contradiction;  
Nor loyalty to treason soured,  
Nor faith abused with fiction.

## XIV.

Honor to Scotland and to Burns!  
In him she stands collected:  
A thousand streams one river make—  
Thus Genius, heaven-directed,  
Conjoins all separate veins of power,  
In one great soul-creation;  
Thus blends a million men to make  
The Poet of the nation!

## XV.

Be green for aye, green bank and brae  
Around Montgomery's Castle!  
Blow there, ye earliest flowers, and there,  
Ye sweetest song-birds, nestle!

For there was ta'en that last farewell  
In hope, indulged how blindly ;  
And there was given that long, last gaze  
"That dwelt" on him "sae kindly."

## XVI.

No word of thine recorded stands ;  
Few words that hour were spoken :  
Two Bibles were exchanged that hour,  
And some slight love-gift broken :  
And there thy cold, faint hands he pressed,  
Thy head, by dew-drops misted :  
And kisses, ill-resisted first,  
At last were unresisted.

## XVII.

Ah ! cease—she died. He, too, is dead.  
Of all her girlish graces  
Perhaps one severed tress remains :  
The rest stern Time effaces—  
Dust lost in dust ! Not so : a bloom  
Is hers that ne'er can wither ;  
And in that lay which lives for aye  
The twain live on together !

## SONNET.

TO CHARLES ELIOT NORTON, ON READING HIS  
"VITA NUOVA" OF DANTE.

NORTON! I would that oft in years to come  
The destined bard of that brave land\* of thine,  
Sole-seated 'neath the tempest-roughen'd pine,  
In boyhood's spring when genius first doth plume  
Her wing, 'mid forest scents and insects' hum  
And murmurs from the far sea crystalline,  
May smell *this* blossom from the Tuscan vine,  
May hear *this* voice from antique Christendom!  
For thus from love and purity and might  
Shall he receive his armor, and forth fare  
Worthy to range in song that country's knight  
Who early burst the chains weak nations bear,  
Weeping. 'Mid trumpet-blasts and standards torn  
To manhood, with loud cries, thy land was born!

March 28, 1860.

## SONNET.

LET me be near thee, and I will not touch  
Thine hand, or grieve thee with reproach or praise,  
Or look into thine eyes. Is this too much?  
Sweet Lady, say not so, for I would gaze

\* America.

On thee for ever. Be but what thou art,  
A Beauty shrined within a silver haze;  
And in the silence let me fill my heart  
With memories calmly stored for wintry days.  
O Lady, there is sorrow here below!  
And gladness seldom comes, and cannot last:  
Thou art all Summer: thou wilt never know  
The cold and cloudy skies which I forecast:  
Deny not thou long years of future woe  
Their comfort sad and sole—a happy Past.

## SONNET.

HAPPY are they who kiss thee, morn and even,  
Parting the hair upon thy forehead white:  
For them the sky is bluer and more bright,  
And purer their thanksgivings rise to Heaven:  
Happy are they to whom thy songs are given:  
Happy are they on whom thy hands alight:  
And happiest they for whom thy prayers at night  
In tender piety so oft have striven.  
Away with vain regrets and selfish sighs—  
Even I, dear friend, am lonely, not unblest:  
Permitted sometimes on that head to gaze,  
Or feel the light of those consoling eyes—  
If but a moment on my cheek it stays  
I know that gentle beam from all the rest!

## SONNET.

PAUSE, lovely Lady, pause : with downward eye  
Regard this humble tomb awhile, and read  
The name of him who loved you well, now freed  
From pains of love—Ah, mournful liberty !  
Sigh forth, too late, an unavailing sigh ;  
And, if thy spirit be to pity moved,  
Pray that a ceaseless dream of her he loved  
Abide upon him everlastingly.  
Stay, lovely Lady, stay ; oh ! stay for hours :  
I feel thy tear-drops falling one by one :  
Yet do not stay, for grief and shame it were  
That tears should fall so fast from eyes so fair,  
And feet that scarcely bend the meadow flowers  
Linger so long upon the chilling stone.

## SONNET.

SILENCE and Sleep, and Midnight's softest gloom  
Consoling friends of fast declining years ;  
Benign assuagers of unfruitful tears ;  
Soft-footed heralds of the wished-for tomb !  
Go to your master Death, the Monarch whom  
Ye serve ; whose majesty your grace endears ;  
And in the awful hollows of his ears  
Murmur, for ever murmur, " Come, oh ! come."  
Virginal rites have I performed full long,  
And all observance worthy of a bride :

Then wherefore, Death, dost thou to me this wrong,  
So long estranged to linger from my side ?  
Am I not thine ? Oh ! breathe upon my eyes  
A gentle answer, Death, from thine Elysian skies !

*A FAREWELL TO NAPLES.*

## I.

A GLORIOUS amphitheatre whose girth  
Exceeds three-fold th' horizons of the north,  
Mixing our pleasure in a goblet wide,  
With hard, firm rim through clear air far-descried ;  
Illumined mountains, on whose heavenly slopes  
Quick, busy shades rehearse, while Phœbus drops,  
Dramatic parts in scenic mysteries ;  
Far-shadowing islands, and exulting seas,  
With cities girt, that catch, till day is done,  
Successive glances from the circling sun,  
And cast a snowy gleam across the blue ;  
A gulf that, to its lake-like softness true,  
Reveres the stillness of the Syren's cell,  
Yet knows the ocean's roll, and loves it well ;  
A gulf where Zephyr oft, with noontide heat  
Oppressed, descends to bathe his sacred feet,  
And, at the first cold touch at once reviving,  
Sinks to the wings in joy, before him driving  
A feathery foam into the lemon groves ;  
Evasive, zone-like sands and secret coves ;

Translucent waves that, heaved with motion slow  
On fanes submerged a brighter gleam bestow ;  
Fair hamlets, streets with odorous myrtles spread,  
Bruised by processions grave with soundless tread,  
That leave (the Duomo entered) on the mind  
A pomp confused, and music on the wind ;  
Smooth, mounded banks like inland coasts and capes,  
That take from seas extinct their sinuous shapes,  
And girdle plains whose growths, fire-fed below,  
Without the bending laborer burst and blow ;  
A light Olympian and an air divine—  
Naples ! if these are blessings, they are thine.

## II.

Thy sands we paced in sunlight and soft gloom ;  
From Tasso's birthplace roamed to Virgil's tomb :  
Baia ! thy haunts we trod, and glimmering caves  
Whose ambushed ardors pant o'er vine-decked waves  
Thy cliffs we coasted, loitered in thy creeks,  
O shaggy island\* with the five grey peaks !  
Explored thy grotto, scaled thy fortress, where  
Thy dark-eyed maids trip down the rocky stair,  
With glance cast backward, laugh of playful scorn,  
And cheek carnationed with the lights of morn.  
The hills Lactarean lodged us in their breast :  
Shadowy Sorrento to her spicy nest  
Called us from far with gales embalmed, yet pure ;  
Her orange brakes we pierced, and ranged her rifts  
obscure.

\* Capri.

Breathless along Pompeii's streets we strayed  
By songless fount, mosaic undecayed,  
Voluptuous tomb, still forum, painted hall,  
Where wreathed Bacchantès float on every wall,  
Where Ariadne, by the purple deep,  
Hears not those panting sails, but smiles in sleep,  
Where yet Silenus grasps the woodland cup,  
And buried Pleasure from its grave looks up.  
Lastly, the great Vesuvian steep we clomb ;  
Then, Naples ! made once more with thee our home.  
We leave thee now : but first, with just review,  
We cast the account, and strike the balance true :  
And thus, as forth we fare, we take our last adieu.

## III.

From her whom genius never yet inspired,  
Nor virtue raised, nor pulse heroic fired ;  
From her who, in the grand historic page,  
Maintains one barren blank from age to age ;  
From her, with insect life and insect buzz,  
Who, evermore unresting, nothing does ;  
From her who, with the future and the past  
No commerce holds, no structure rears to last ;  
From streets where spies and jesters, side by side,  
Range the rank markets, and their gains divide ;  
Where Faith in Art, and Art in sense is lost,  
And toys and gewgaws form a nation's boast ;  
Where Passion, from Affection's bond cut loose,  
Revels in orgies of its own abuse ;  
And Appetite, from Passion's portals thrust,  
Creeps on its belly to its grave of dust ;



Where Vice her mask disdains, where Fraud is loud,  
 And naught but Wisdom dumb and Justice cowed ;—  
 Lastly, from her who planted here unawed,  
 'Mid heaven-topped hills, and waters bright and broad,  
 From these but nerves more swift to err hath gained,  
 And the dread stamp of sanctities profaned,  
 And, girt not less with ruin, lives to show  
 That worse than wasted weal is wasted woe,—  
 We part, forth issuing through her closing gate  
 With unreverting faces, not ingrate.

1844.

PSYCHE,

OR, AN OLD POET'S LOVE.

I.

O ORIENT Isle that gave her birth !

O Delos of a holier sea !

O casket of uncounted worth !

How dear thou art to Love and me !

Thy whispering woods in some soft dell

Now charmed, now broke the Infant's rest ;

Thy vales the wild-flower cherished well

Predestined for the Virgin's breast.

May airs salubrious, gusts of balm,

On all thy shores incumbent, blow

Thy billow from the glassy calm,

And fringe thy myrtles with sea-snow !

My Psyche's lips thy zephyrs breathe ;  
My Psyche's feet thy pastures tread :—  
O Isle of isles around me wreath  
Thine asphodels when I am dead !

## II.

How blue were Ariadne's eyes  
When, from the sea's horizon line,  
At eve she raised them on the skies ;  
My Psyche, bluer far are thine.

How pallid, snatched from falling flowers,  
The cheek averse of Proserpine,  
Unshadowed yet by Stygian bowers ;  
My Psyche, paler far is thine.

Yet thee no lover e'er forsook ;  
No tyrant urged with love unkind :  
Thy joy the ungentle cannot brook ;  
Thy light would strike the unworthy blind.

A golden flame invests thy tresses :  
An azure flame invests thine eyes :  
And well that wingless form expresses  
Communion with relinquished skies.

Forbear, O breezes of the West,  
To waft her to her native bourne ;  
For heavenly, by her feet impressed,  
Becomes our ancient earth outworn.

On Psyche's life our beings hang :  
In Psyche life and love are one :—  
My Psyche glanced at me and sang,  
“ Perhaps to-morrow I am gone !”

## III.

## PSYCHE'S BATH.

O stream beloved ! O stream unknown !  
In which my love has bathed !  
Be still thy fount unvexed with floods,  
Thy marge by heats unscathed.

How oft her white hand tempted thine !  
How oft, by fears delayed,  
Ere yet her light had filled thy depth,  
With thee her shadow played !

Thy purity encompassed hers ;  
Thy crystal cased my pearl ;  
Of founts, the fairest fount embraced  
Of girls, the loveliest girl.

May still thy lilies round thee wave,  
As shaken by a sigh !  
Thy violets, blooming where she gazed,  
Bloom first and latest die !

May better bards, when I am gone,  
Like birds salute thy bower ;  
And each that sings thee grow in heart  
A virgin from that hour.

## IV.

## PSYCHE'S STUDY.

The low sun smote the topmost rocks,  
Ascending o'er the eastern sea :  
Backward my Psyche waved her locks ;  
And held her book upon her knee.

No brake was near, no flower, no bird,  
No music but the ocean wave,  
That with complacent murmur stirred  
The echoes of a neighboring cave.

Absorbed my Psyche sat, her face  
Reflecting Plato's sun-like soul ;  
And seemed in every word to trace  
The pent-up spirit of the whole.

Absorbed she sat in breathless mood,  
 Unmoved as kneeler at a shrine,  
 Save one slight finger that pursued  
 The meaning on from line to line.

As some white flower in forest nook  
 Bends o'er its own face in a well,  
 So seemed the virgin in that book  
 Her soul, unread before, to spell.

Sudden, a crimson butterfly  
 On that illumined page alit:—  
 My Psyche flung the volume by,  
 And sister-like, gave chase to it!

V.

PSYCHE SINGING.

Between the green hill and the cloud  
 The skylark loosed his silver chain  
 Of rapturous music, clear and loud—  
 My Psyche answered back the strain.

A glory raced along the sky;  
 She sang, and all dark things grew plain;  
 Hope, starlike, shone; and Memory  
 Flashed like a cypress gemmed with rain.

The noble warfare recommenced ;  
Once more that skylark's challenge rang :  
Once more with him my Psyche fenced ;  
At last the twain commingled sang.

Then first I learned the skylark's lore ;  
Then first the words he sang I knew :  
My soul with transport flooded o'er  
As breeze-borne gossamer with dew.

## VI.

"Can Love be just ? can Hope be wise ?  
Can Youth renew his honors dead ?"  
On me my Psyche turned her eyes ;  
And all my great resolves were fled.

Psyche, I said, when thou art nigh  
Transpicious grow the mists of years :  
I cannot ever wholly die  
If on my grave should drop thy tears.

Nor thine a part in mortal hours :  
Thy flower nor Autumn knows, nor May :  
Thou bendest from sidereal bowers  
A shape supernal, bright for aye.

Though I be nothing, yet the best  
To thee no gift of price could give :—  
Fall then in radiance on my breast  
And in thy blessing bid me live !

## VII.

Pure lip coralline, slightly stirred ;  
Thus stir ; but speak not ! Love can see  
On you the syllables unheard  
Which are his only melody.

Pure, drooping lids, dark lashes wet  
With that un hoped-for, trembling tear,  
Thus droop, thus meet ; nor give me yet  
The eyes that I desire, yet fear.

Hands lightly clasped on meekest knee ;  
All-beauteous head, as by a spell  
Bent forward ; loveliest form, to me  
A lovely soul made visible ;

Speak not ! move not ! More tender grows  
The heart, long musing. Night may plead,  
Perhaps, my part, and, at its close,  
The morning bring me light indeed.

## VIII.

She leaves us : many a gentler breast  
Will mourn our common loss like me :  
The babe her hands, her voice caressed,  
The lamb that couched beside her knee.

The touch thou lov'st—the robe's far gleam—  
Thou shalt not find, thou dark-eyed fawn !  
Thy light is lost, exultant stream :  
Dim woods, your sweetness is withdrawn.

Descend, dark heavens, and flood with rain  
Their crimson roofs ; their silence rout :  
Their vapor-laden branches strain ;  
And force the smothered sadness out !

That so the ascended moon, when breaks  
The cloud, may light once more a scene  
Fair as some cheek that suffering makes  
Only more tearfully serene :—

That so the vale she loved may look  
Calm as some cloister roofed with snows,  
Wherein, unseen, in shadowy nook,  
A buried Vestal finds repose.



IX.

What art thou? If thou livest, I know  
 That thou art good, and true, and fair :  
 But there are dreams that whisper low,  
 "Thou dream'st! thy passion paints the air. '

"Grief sat upon thy heart for years :—  
 That heart, by light bewildered now,  
 All that it missed beholds through tears  
 Throned on a single, beaming brow.

"Or else thy Fancy, tired of dust,  
 Unsphered a Spirit. Self-enthralled,  
 It worships now, because it must,  
 An Idol pride at first enstalled.

"Or else the pathos of the past  
 Above thy present moves in power ;  
 And o'er thy dusty day hath cast  
 This dew-drop from its matin hour.

"In her thou lov'st the times gone by,  
 In her the joys possessed, not missed :  
 It was not Hope, but Memory  
 Thy dreaming lids that bent and kissed !

"In her the dewy lawns forlorn  
 Thou lov'st ; the gleams along them flung ;  
 The witcheries of the awakening morn ;  
 The echo of its latest song.

“Thou tread’st once more Castalia’s brink :  
Far down, thy youth finds rest from trouble ;  
And thou that saw’st it slowly sink  
Dost watch its latest breaking-bubble.”

*ODE.*

THE ASCENT OF THE APENNINES.

I.

I MOVE through a land like a land of dream,  
Where the things that are, and that shall be, seem  
Wov’n into one by a hand of air,  
And the Good looks piercingly down through the  
Fair !

No form material is here unmated,

Here blows no bud, no scent can rise,  
No song ring forth, unconsecrated

To a meaning or model in Paradise !  
Fallen, like man, is elsewhere the earth ;  
Human, at best, in her sadness and mirth ;  
Or if she aspires after something greater,

Lifting her hands from her native dust,

In God she beholds but the wise, the just ;

The Saviour she sees not in the Creator :  
But here, like children of saints who learn

The things above ere the things below,  
Who choirs angelic in clouds discern

Ere the butterfly’s wing from the moth’s they  
know,

True Nature as ashes all beauty reckons  
That claims not hereafter some happier birth  
She calls from the height to the depth ; she beckons  
From the nomad waste to a heavenly hearth :  
“ The curse is cancelled,” she cries ; “ thou dreamer,  
Earth felt the tread of the great Redeemer !”

## II.

Ye who ascend with reverent foot  
The warm vale's rocky stairs,  
Though lip be mute, in heart salute  
With praises and with prayers  
The noble hands, now dust, that reared  
Long ages since on crag or sward  
Those Stations from their cells revered  
Still preaching of the Lord !  
Ah ! unseductive here the breath  
Of the vine-bud that blows in the breast of  
morn ;  
That orange bower, yon jasmine wreath,  
Hide not the crown of thorn !  
Here none can bless the spring, and drink  
The waters from the dark that burst,  
Nor see the sponge and the reed, and think  
Of the Three Hours' unquenched thirst.  
The Tender, the Beauteous receives its comment  
From a truth transcendent, a life divine ;  
And the coin flung loose of the passing moment  
Is stamped with Eternity's sign !

## III.

Alas for the wilder'd days of yore  
When Nature lay vassal to pagan lore !  
Baia—what was she ? A sorceress still  
To brute transforming the human will !  
Nor pine could whisper, nor breeze could move  
But a breath infected ran o'er the blood  
Like gales that whiten the aspen grove  
Or gusts that darken the flood.  
Along the ocean's gleaming level  
The beauteous base ones held their revel,  
Dances on the sea-sand knitting,  
With shouts the sleeping shepherd scaring,  
Like Oreads o'er the hill-side flitting,  
Like Mænads thyrsus-bearing.  
The Siren sang from the moonlit bay,  
The Siren sang from the redd'ning lawn,  
Until in the crystal cup of day  
Lay melted the pearl of dawn.  
Unspiritual intelligence  
Changed Nature's fane to a hall of sense,  
That rings with the upstart spoiler's jest,  
And the beakers clash'd by the drunken guest !

## IV.

Hark to that convent bell !  
False pagan world, farewell ;  
From cliff to cliff the challenge vaults rebounded !

Echo, her wanderings done,  
Heart-peace at last hath won,  
The rest of love on Faith not Fancy founded ;  
"By the parch'd fountain let the pale flower die,"  
She sings, "True love, true joy, triumphant reign  
on high !"

## v.

The plains recede ; the olives dwindle ;  
The chestnut slopes fall far behind ;  
The skirts of the billowy pine-woods kindle  
In the evening lights and wind.  
Not here we sigh for the Alpine glory  
Of peak primeval and death-pale snow ;  
For the cold grey green, and the glacier hoary,  
Or blue caves that yawn below.  
The landscape here is mature and mellow ;  
Fruit-like, not flower-like :—hills embrown'd ;  
Ridges of purple and ledges of yellow  
From red stream to rock church-crown'd :  
'Tis a region of mystery, hush'd and sainted :  
Serene as the visions of artists old  
When the thoughts of Dante his Giotto painted :—  
The summit is reach'd ! Behold !  
Like a sky condensed lies the lake far down ;  
Its curves like the orbit of some fair planet ;  
A fire-wreath falls on the cliffs that frown  
Above it—dark walls of granite ;  
The hill-sides with homesteads and hamlets glow ;  
With snowy villages zoned below :

Down drops by the island's woody shores  
The banner'd barge with the rhythmic oars.  
No solitude here, no desert cheerless  
Is needed pure thoughts or hearts to guard ;  
'Tis a populous solitude, festal, fearless,  
For men of good-will prepared.  
The hermit may hide in the wood, but o'er it  
All day the happy chimes are rolled :  
The black crag woos the cloud, but before it  
The procession winds on white-stoled.  
Farewell, O Nature ! None meets thee here  
But his heart goes up to a happier sphere !  
The radiance around him spread forgetting  
That City he sees on whose golden walls  
No light of a rising sun, or setting,  
Of moon or of planet falls,  
For the Lamb alone is the light thereof—  
The City of Truth, the Kingdom of Love !

## VI.

There shall the features worn and wasted  
Let fall the sullen mask of years :  
There shall that fruit at last be tasted  
Whose seed was sown in tears :  
There shall that amaranth bloom for ever  
Whose blighted blossom droop'd erewhile  
In this dim valley of exile,  
And by the Babylonian river.  
The loved and lost once more shall meet us ;  
Joys that never were ours shall greet us ;

Delights for the love of the Cross foregone  
Fullfaced salute us, ashamed of none.  
Heroes unnamed the storm that weathered  
There shall sceptred stand and crown'd ;  
Apostles the wilder'd flocks that gather'd  
Sit with the nations round.  
There, heavenly sweets from the earthly bitter  
Shall rise like odor from herbs down-trod ;  
There, tears of the past like gems shall glitter  
On the trees that gladden the mount of God.  
The deeds of the righteous, on earth despised,  
By the lightning of God immortalized  
Shall crown like statues the walls sublime  
Of all the illuminate, mystic City,  
Memorial emblems that conquer Time,  
Yet tell his tale. That Pity  
Which gave the lost one strength to speak,  
That Love in guise angelic stooping  
O'er the grey old head, or the furrow'd cheek,  
Or the neck depress'd and drooping,  
Shall live for ever, emboss'd or graven  
On the chalcedon gates and the streets pearl-paven :  
The Thoughts of the just, at a flash transferr'd  
From the wastes of earth to the courts of the Word,  
The hopes abortive, the frustrate schemes,  
Shall lack not a place in the wond'rous session ;  
The prayers of the Saints, their griefs, their dreams,  
Shall be manifest there in vision ;  
For they live in the Mind Divine, their mould,  
That Mind Divine the unclouded mirror  
Wherein the glorified Spirits behold  
All worlds, undimm'd by error.

## VII.

Fling fire on the earth, O God,  
Consuming all things base !  
Fling fire upon man, his soul and his blood,  
The fire of Thy Love and Grace :  
That his heart once more to its natal place  
Like a bondsman freed may rise,  
Ascending for ever before Thy face  
From the altar of Sacrifice !

And thou, Love's comrade, Hope,  
That giv'st to Wisdom strength, to Virtue scope,  
That giv'st to man and nation  
The on-rushing plumes of spiritual aspiration,  
Van-courier of the ages, Faith's strong guide,  
That still the attain'd foregoest for the descried :—  
On, Seraph, on, through night and tempest wing-  
ing !

On heavenward, on, across the void, vast hollow !  
And be it ours, to thy wide skirts close clinging  
Blindly, like babes, thy conquering flight to fol-  
low.

What though the storm of Time roar on beside us ?  
Though this world mock or chide us ?  
We shall not faint or fail until at last  
The eternal shore is reach'd, all danger past !

May, 1859.



## GLAUCÈ.

I LOVE you, pretty maid, for you are young :  
I love you, pretty maid, for you are fair :  
I love you, pretty maid, for you love me.

They tell me that, a babe, smiling you gazed  
Upon the stars, with open, asking eyes,  
And tremulous lips apart. Erelong, self-taught,  
You found for every star and every flower  
Legends and names and fables sweet and new.

O that when far away I still might see thee !  
How oft, when wearied with the din of life  
On thee my eyes would rest, thy Grecian heavens  
Brightening that orbèd brow !—  
Hesper should shine upon thee—lamp of Love,  
Beneath whose radiance thou wert born. O Hesper !  
Thee will I love and reverence evermore !

Bind up that shining hair into a knot  
And let me see that polished neck of thine  
Uprising from the bed snow-soft, snow-white  
In which it rests so gracefully ! What God  
Hath drawn upon thy forehead's ivory plane  
Those two clear streaks of sweet and glistening black  
Lifted in earnest mirth or lovely awe ?  
Open those Pleiad eyes, liquid and tender,

And let me lose myself among their depths !  
Caress me with thine infant hands, and tell me  
Old tales divine that love makes ever new  
Of Gods and men entailed in flowery nets,  
Of heroes sighing all their youth away,  
And Troy, death-sentenced by those Argive eyes.

Come forth, dear maid, the day is calm and cool,  
And bright though sunless. Like a long green scarf,  
The tall Pines crowning yon grey promontory  
In distant ether hang, and cut the sea.  
But lovers better love the dell, for there  
Each is the other's world.—How indolently  
The tops of those pale poplars bend and sway  
Over the violet-braided river-brim !  
Whence comes their motion, for no wind is heard,  
And the long grasses move not, nor the reeds ?  
Here we will sit, and watch the rushes lying  
Like locks, along the leaden-colored stream  
Far off—and thou, O child, shalt talk to me  
Of Naiads and their loves. A blissful life  
They lead who live beneath the flowing waters.  
They cherish calm, and think the sea-weeds fair :  
They love each other's beauty ; love to stand  
Among the lilies, holding back their tresses  
And listening, with their gentle cheek reclined  
Upon the flood, to some far melody  
Of Pan or shepherd piping in lone woods  
Until the unconscious tears run down their face.  
Mild are their loves, nor burdensome their thoughts—  
And would that such a life were mine and thine !

IONÈ.

IONE, fifteen years have o'er you passed,  
And, taking nothing from you in their flight,  
Have given you much. You look like one for whom  
The day has morning only, time but Spring.  
Your eyes are large and calm, your lips serene,  
As if no Winter with your dreams commingled,  
You that dream always, or that never dream !

Dear maid, you should have been a shepherdess—  
But no : ill-tended then your flocks had strayed.  
Young fawns you should have led ; such fawns as once  
The quivered Queen had spared to startle ! Then  
Within your hand a willow wand, your brow  
Wreathed with red roses dabbled in warm rains,  
How sweetly, with half-serious countenance,  
Through the green alleys had you ta'en your way !  
And they, your spotted train, how happily  
Would they have gambolled by you—happiest she  
The milk-white creature in the silver chain !

Ionè, lay the tapestry down : come forth—  
No golden ringlet shall you add this morn  
To bright Apollo : and poor Daphne there !  
Without her verdant branches she must rest  
Another day—a cruel tale, sweet girl !

You will not ! Then farewell our loves for ever !  
We are too far unlike : not Cyclops more

Unlike that Galatea whom he courted.  
I love the loud-resounding sea divine ;  
I love the wintry sunset, and the stress  
Inexorable of wide-wasting storms ;  
I love the waste of foam-washed promontories ;  
Thunder, and all portentous change that makes  
The mind of mortals like to suns eclipsed  
Waning in icy terrors. These to you  
Are nothing. On the ivied banks you lie  
In deep green valleys grey with noontide dew.  
There bathe your feet in bubbling springs, your hands  
Playing with the moist pansies near your face.

These bowers are musical with nightingales  
Morning and noon and night. Among these rocks  
A lovely life is that you lead ; but I  
Will make it lovelier with some pretty gift  
If you are constant to me ! Constant never  
Was Nymph or Nereid : — like the waves they  
change ;—

O Nymph so change not thou ! A boat I'll make  
Scooped from a pine : yourself shall learn to row it ;  
Swifter than winds or sounds can fleet ; or else  
Your scarf shall be the sail, and you shall glide,  
While the stars drop their light upon the bay,  
On like a bird between the double heaven !  
Are these but trivial joys ? Ah me ! fresh leaves  
Gladden the forests ; but no second life  
Invests our branches—feathers new make bright

The birds ; but when our affluent locks desert us,  
No Spring restores them. Dried-up streams once  
more

The laughing Nymphs replenish ; but man's life,  
By fate drawn down and smothered in the sands,  
Never looks up. Alas, my sweet Ionè,  
Alcæus also loved ; but in his arms  
Finds rest no more the song-full Lesbian maid :  
The indignant hand attesting Gods and men  
Achilles lifts no more : to dust is turned  
His harp that glittered through the wild sea spray,  
Though the black wave falls yet on Ilion's shore.  
All things must die—the Songs themselves, except  
The devout hymn of grateful love ; or hers,  
The wild swan's, chaunting her death melody.

*LYCIUS.*

LYCIUS ! the female race is all the same !  
All variable, as the Poets tell us ;  
Mad through caprice — half way 'twixt men and  
children.

Acasta, mildest lake of all our maids,  
Colder and calmer than a sacred well,  
Is now more changed than Spring has changed these  
thickets :  
Hers is the fault, not mine. Yourself shall judge.

From Epidaurus, where from three long days  
With Nicias I had stayed, honoring the God,  
If strength might thus mine aged Sire renerve,  
Last evening we returned. The way was dull  
And vexed with mountains: tired ere long was I  
From warding off the oleander boughs  
Which, as my comrade o'er the stream's dry bed  
Pushed on, closed backward on my mule and me.  
The flies maintained a melody unblest;  
While Nicias, of his wreath Nemean proud,  
Sang of the Satyrs and the Nymphs all day  
Like one by Esculapius fever-smitten.  
Arrived at eve, we bathed; and drank, and ate  
Of figs and olives till our souls exulted.  
Lastly we slept like gods. When morning shone,  
So filled was I with weariness and sleep  
That as a log till noon I lay; then rose,  
And in the bath-room sat. While there I languished  
Reading that old, divine and holy tale  
Of sad Ismenè and Antigonè,  
Two warm soft hands flung suddenly around me  
Closed both my eyes; and a clear, shrill, sweet  
laughter  
Told me that she it was, Acasta's self,  
That brake upon my dreams. "What would you  
child?"  
"Child, child," Acasta cried! "I am no child—  
You do me wrong in calling me a child!  
Come with me to the willowy river's brim:  
There read, if you must read."

Her eyes not less  
Than hands uplifted me, and forth we strayed.  
O'er all the Argolic plain Apollo's shafts  
So fiercely fell, methought the least had slain  
A second Python. From that theatre  
Hewn in the rock the Argive tumult rolled !  
Before the fane of Juno seven vast oxen  
Low'd loud, denouncing Heaven ere yet they fell :  
While from the hill-girt meadows rose a scent  
So rich, the salt sea odors vainly strove  
To pierce those fumes it curled about my brain,  
And sting the nimbler spirits. Nodding I watched  
The pale herbs from the parched bank that trailed  
Bathing delighted in voluptuous cold,  
And scarcely swayed by that slow winding stream.  
I heard a sigh—I asked not whence it came.  
At last a breeze went by, to glossy waves  
Rippling the steely flood : I noted then  
The reflex of the poplar stem thereon  
Curled into spiral wreaths, and toward me darting  
Like a long, shining water-snake : I laughed  
To see its restlessness. Acasta cried,  
“Read—if you will not speak—or look at me !”  
Unconsciously I glanced upon the page,  
Bent o'er it, and began to chaunt that chorus,  
“Favored by Love are they that love not deeply,”  
When, leaping from my side, she snatched the  
book,  
Into the river dashed it, bounded by,  
And, no word spoken, left me there alone.

Lycius ! I see you smile ; but know you not  
Nothing is trifling which the Muse records,  
And lovers love to muse on ? Let the Gods  
Act as to them seems fitting. Hermes loved—  
Phœbus loved also—but the hearts of Gods  
Are everlasting like the suns and stars,  
Their loves as transient as the clouds. For me  
A peaceful life is all I seek, and far  
Removed from cares and all the female kind !

*LINES WRITTEN UNDER DELPHI.*

## I.

My goal is reached—homeward henceforth my way.  
I have beheld Earth's glories. Had the eyes  
Of those I love reposed on them with mine,  
No future wish to roam beyond the range  
Of one green pasture circling one clear lake  
Itself by one soft woodland girt around,  
Could touch this heart. My pilgrimage is made.

## II.

I have seen Delphi : I no more shall see it.  
I go contented, having seen it once ;  
Yet here awhile remain, prisoner well-pleased  
Of reboant winds. Within this mountain cove



Their sound alone finds entrance. Lightly the waves  
 (Rolled from the outer to the inner bay)  
 Dance in blue silver o'er the silver sands ;  
 While, like a chain-bound antelope by some child  
 Mocked oft with tempting hand and fruit upholden,  
 Our quick caique vaults up among the reeds,  
 The ripples that plunge past it upward sending  
 O'er the grey margin matted with sea-pink  
 Ripplings of light. The moon is veiled ; a mile  
 Below the mountain's eastern range it hangs :  
 Yon gleam is but its reflex, from white clouds  
 Scattered along Parnassian peaks of snow.

III.

I see but waves and snows. Memory alone  
 Fruition hath of what this morn was mine :  
 O'er many a beauteous scene at once she broods,  
 And feeds on joys without confusion blent  
 Like mingling sounds or odors. Now she rests  
 On that serene expanse (the confluence  
 Of three long vales) in sweetness upward heaved,  
 Ample and rich as Juno's breast what time  
 The Thunderer's breath in sleep moves over it :  
 Bathes in those runnels now, that raced together  
 This morn as at some festival of streams,  
 Through arbutus and ilex, wafting each  
 Upon its glassy track a several breeze,  
 Each with its tale of joy or playful sadness.  
 Fair nymphs, by great Apollo's fall untouched !  
 Sing, sing, for ever ! When did golden Phœbus  
 Look sad one moment for a fair nymph's fall ?

## IV.

A still, black glen—below, a stream-like copse  
Of hoary olives ; rocks like walls beside,  
Never by Centaur trod, though these fresh gales  
Give man the Centaur's strength ! Again I mount,  
From cliff to cliff, from height to height ascending ;  
Glitters Castalia's Fount ; I see, I touch it !  
That Rift once more I reach, the Oracular seat,  
Whose arching rocks half meet in air suspense ;  
'Twixt them is one blue streak of heaven ; hard by  
Dim Temples hollowed in the stone, for rites  
Mysterious shaped, or mansions of the dead :  
Released, I turn, and see, far, far below,  
A vale so rich in floral garniture,  
And odors from the orange and the sea,  
So girt with white peaks flashing from sky chasms,  
So lighted with the vast blue dome of Heaven,  
So lulled with music from the winds and waves,  
The guest of Phœbus claps his hands and shouts,  
"There is but one such spot ; from Heaven Apollo  
Beheld ;—and chose it for his earthly shrine !"

## V.

Phœbus Apollo ! loftiest shape of all  
That glorified the range of Grecian song,  
By Poet hymned or Shepherd when the rocks  
Confessed the first bright impress of thy feet ;  
By many an old man praised when Thracian blasts  
Sang loud, and pine-wood stores began to fail ;

Served by the sick man searching hill and plain  
 For herb assuasive ; courted by sad maids  
 On whose pure lips thy fancied kiss descended  
 Softly as vernal beam on primrose cold :  
 By Fortune's troubled Favorites ofttime sued  
 For dubious answer, then when Fate malign,  
 Beyond the horizon of high Hopes ascending,  
 Her long fell glance had cast on them—Apollo  
 Who, what wert thou ? Let those who read thy tale  
 In clouded chambers of the North, reply,  
 "An empty dream!"—bid them fling far the scroll,  
 The dusty parchment fling aside for ever,  
 Or scan with light from thy Parnassian skies !  
 For Commentator's lamp give them thine orb  
 Flaming on high, transfixing cloud and wave  
 Or noon-tide laurel—(as the Zephyr strikes,  
 Daphne once more shrinks trembling from thy  
 beams)—

Were these but fancies ? O'er the world they reared  
 The only empire verily universal  
 Founded by man—for Fancy heralds Thought ;  
 Thought Act ; and nations Are as they Believe.  
 Strong were such fancies,—strong not less than fair !  
 The plant spontaneous of Society  
 In Greece, by them with stellar power was dewed,  
 And, nursed by their far influence, grew and flour-  
 ished :

A state of order and fair fellowship,  
 Man with man walking, not in barbarous sort  
 His own prey finding, each, and his own God ;  
 A state of freedom, not by outward force

Compressed, or ice-like knit by negatives ;  
A frank communion of deep thoughts with glad,  
Light cares with grave—a changeful melody  
Varying each moment, yet in soul the same ;  
A temple raised for beauty and defence .  
An armed dance held for a festival ;  
A balanced scheme that gave each power a limit,  
Each toil a crown, and every art her Muse !  
O frank and graceful life of Grecian years !  
Whence came thy model ? From the Grecian heaven  
The loves and wars of Gods, their works and ways,  
Their several spheres distinct yet interwreathed,  
By Greece were copied on a lesser stage.  
Our thoughts soar high to light our paths on earth.  
Terrestrial circles from celestial take  
Their impress in man's science. Stars unreached  
Our course o'er ocean guide. Orphean sounds  
The walls of cities raised ;—thus mythic bards  
For all the legislators legislated !

## VI.

Yet these were idols : such as worshipped these  
Were worshippers of idols. Holy and True !  
How many are there not idolaters ?  
Traditions, Systems, Passion, Interest, Power—  
Are these not idols ? Ay, the worst of idols !  
Not that men worship these ; but that before them  
Down-bent, the faculty that worship pays  
Shrivels and dies. Man's spirit alone adores,  
And can adore but Spirit. What is not God,  
Howe'er our fears may crouch, or habit grovel,

Or sensuous fancy dote, we worship not :  
Unless God look on man, he cannot pray ;  
Such is Idolatry's masked Atheism !  
—Yes, these were idols, for man made them idols.  
By a corrupt heart all things are corrupted,  
God's works alike or products of the mind.  
The Soul, insurgent 'gainst its Maker, lacks  
The strength its vassal powers to rule. The Will  
To blind Caprice grows subject : Reason, torn  
From Faith, becomes the Understanding's slave ;  
And Passion's self in Appetite is lost.  
Then Idols dominate—Despots by Self-will  
Set up, where Law and Faith alike are dead,  
To awe the anarchy of godless souls.  
Nought but a Worship, spiritual and pure,  
Profound, habitual, strong through loving awe,  
A true heart's tribute to the God of Truth ;  
From selfishness redeemed, and so from sense  
Secured, though conversant with shapes of sense,  
Nought but such Worship, with spontaneous force  
From our whole Being equably ascending  
As odor from a flower or fount's clear breath,  
Redeems us from Idolatry. In vain  
Are proudly wise appeals that deprecate  
Rites superstitious ; vain are words though shrill  
With scorn—stark, pointed finger,—forehead ridged  
With blear-eyed Scepticism's myriad wrinkles :  
Saintly we must be, or Idolatrous.  
After his image Man creates him Gods,  
Kneading the symbol (as a symbol holy  
And salutary) to a form compact

With servile soul and mean mechanic hand—  
Thus to their native dust his Thoughts return,  
Abashed, and of mortality convinced.

## VII.

At Salem was the Law. The Holy Land  
Its orient terrace by the ocean reared,  
And thereon walked the Holy One, at cool  
Of the world's morn : there visible state He kept.  
At Salem was the Law on stone inscribed ;  
But over all the world, within man's heart  
The unwritten Law abode, from earliest time  
Upon our nature stamp'd, nor wholly lost.  
Men saw it, loved it, praised—and disobeyed.  
Therefore the Conscience, whose applausive voice  
Their march triumphant should have led with joy  
To all perfection, from a desert pealed  
The Baptist's note alone—" Repent, repent ;"  
And men with song more flattering filled their ears.  
Yet still the undersong was holy ! long  
(Though cast on days unblest, though sin-defiled)  
The mind accepted, yea the heart revered,  
That which the Will lacked strength to follow. Con-  
science  
(Her crown monarchal first, her fillet next  
Snatched from her sacred brows) a minstrel's wreath  
Assumed ; and breathed in song her soul abroad :

On outcast Duty's grave she, with her tears  
Dropt flowers funereal of surpassing beauty ;  
With Reason walked ; the right path indicated,  
Though her imperative voice was heard no more.  
Nor spake in vain. Man, fallen man was great,  
Remembering ancient greatness : Hymn and tale  
Held, each, some portion of dismembered Truth,  
Severely sung by Poets wise and brave.  
They sang of Justice, God's great attribute,  
With tragic buskin, and a larger stride  
Following the fated victim step by step.  
They sang of Love crowning the toils of life :  
Of Joy they sang ; for Joy, that gift divine,  
Primal and wingèd creature, with full breath  
Through all the elastic limbs of Grecian fable  
Poured her redundant life ; the noble tongue  
Strong as the brazen clang of ringing arms,  
With resonance of liquid sounds enriching  
Sweet as the music-laughter of the Gods :—  
Of heavenly Pity, Prophet-like they sang ;  
And, feeling after Good though finding not,  
Of Him, that Good not yet in Flesh revealed,  
By ceaseless vigils, tears, and lifted palms,  
And yearnings infinite and unrepressed,  
A separate and authentic witness bore.  
Thus was the end foreshown. Thus Error's "cloud  
Turned forth its silver lining on the night."  
Thus too—for us at least a precious gift,  
Dear for the lore it grasped, by all it lacked  
Made strong not less vain-glorious thoughts to chide,  
Wisdom shone forth—but not for men unwise :



Her beams but taint the dead. Man's Guilt and Woe  
She proved—and her own Helplessness confessed.  
Such were her two great functions. Woe to those  
Who live with Art for Faith, and Bards for Priests !  
These are supplanted : Sense their loftiest hopes  
Will sap ; and Fiends usurp their oracles !

## VIII.

Olympian dreams, farewell ! your spell is past :  
I turn from you away ! From Eros' self,  
From heavenly Beauty on thy crystal brow  
Uranian Venus, starred in gentlest light,  
From thee, Prometheus, chained on Caucasus,  
Io from thee, sad wanderer o'er the earth,  
From thee great Hercules, the son of Heaven  
And of Humanity held long in pain ;  
Heroic among men ; by labors tried ;  
Descending to the Shades, and leading thence  
The Lost ; while infant still a Serpent-slayer ;  
In death a dread and mystic Sacrifice—  
From thee, more high than all, from thee, Apollo !  
Light of the world whose sacred beam, like words,  
Illustrated the forehead of the earth ;  
Supreme of Harmonists, whose song flowed forth  
Pure from that light ; great slayer of the Serpent  
That mocked thy Mother ; master of that art  
Healing man's ancient wound ; Oracular :  
Secretly speaking wisdom to the just ;



Openly to the lost from lips unheeded  
Like thy Cassandra's flinging it to waste—  
Phœbus Apollo ! here at thy chief shrine  
From thee I turn ; and stern confession make  
That not the vilest weed yon ripple casts  
Here at my feet, but holds a loftier gift  
Than all the Grecian Legends. Let them go—  
Because the mind of man they lifted up,  
But corruptible instincts left to grovel  
On Nature's common plane—year and below it ;  
Because they slightly healed the People's wound :  
And sought in genial fancy, finite hopes,  
Proportioned life, and dialectic Art,  
A substitute for Virtue ; and because  
They gave for nothing that which Faith should earn,  
Casting the pearls of Truth 'neath bestial feet :—  
Because they washed the outside of the cup,  
And dropped a thin veil o'er the face of Death ;  
Because they neither brought man to his God,  
Nor let him feel his weakness—let them go !  
Wisdom that raises not her sons is Folly :  
Truth in its unity alone is Truth.

## IX.

What now is Delphi ? Where that temple now  
Dreadful to kings ; with votive offerings stored,  
Tripod, or golden throne from furthest lands,  
Or ingot huge ? Where now that tremulous stone,  
Centre of all things deemed—Earth's beating heart ?

What now is Delphi ? yea, or Hellas' self,  
With all her various States ; epitome  
Of Nations ; stage whereon in little space  
Forecasting Time rehearsed his thousand parts ?  
Sparta's one camp—the sacred plain of Thebes ;  
That plain, pious as rich, whence grateful Ceres  
The hand that blesses Earth upraised to Heaven—  
The unboastful freedom of Arcadian vales—  
Athens with Academic Arts, and ships  
Far-seen from pillared headlands ? Where, O where  
Olympia's chariot-course that bent the eyes  
Of Greece on one small ring shining like fire—  
Or they, that sacred Council, at whose nod  
King and Republic trembled ? Gone for ever !  
Vine on the wave diffused, budding with Isles ;  
Bower of young Earth, wherein the East and West,  
Wedded, their beauteous progeny upreared ;  
Hellas, by Nature blest, by Freedom nursed,  
By Providence led on through discipline  
Of change, till that Philosophy was formed  
Which made one City man's perpetual Teacher—  
Hellas is past ! A lamentable voice  
Forth from the caverns of Antiquity  
Issuing in mystery, answers, Where is Egypt ?  
Egypt of magic craft and starry lore,  
Eternal brooder on the unknown Past  
Through the long vista of her Kings and Priests  
Descried, as setting Moon beyond the length  
Of forest aisle, or desert colonnade ;  
Eldest of nations, and apart, like Night  
Dark-veiled amid the synod of the Gods ?

The sun and stars with gaze alternate wonder  
At pyramids sand-drowned, and long processions  
Now petrified to lines of marble shapes  
That lead to Sphinx-girt Cities of the Dead !  
Where now is Babylon, mighty by peace  
And gold, and men countless as forest leaves ?  
Persia, the Macedonian, Carthage, Tyre ?  
All gone—restored to earth ! Great Rome herself,  
Haughty with arcs of triumph, theatres  
Sphered to embrace all Nations and their Gods ;  
Roads from one centre piercing lands remote ;  
Bridges, fit type of Conquest's giant stride ;  
Great Rome herself, empire of War and Law—  
Yoking far regions—harrowing those fields  
Reserved for Christian seed—Great Rome herself  
Was, and is not ! The eternal edict stands :  
The power from God which comes not, drops and  
dies.

## X.

Hark, to that sound ! yon ocean Eagle drives  
The mist of morn before her, seaward launched  
From her loved nest on Delphi. She, though stern,  
Can love—a divine instinct, that outlasts  
Phœbus, thy fabulous honors ! Far away  
The storms are dying, and the night-bird pours,  
Encouraged thus, her swift and rapturous song.  
Ah ! when that song is over, I depart !

Return, my wandering thoughts ! the ascended Moon  
Smiles on her Brother's peaks, and many a ridge  
Her glance solicits ; many a stirring wood  
Exults in her strong radiance as she glides  
On from the pine gulf to the gulf of clouds.  
Return, my thoughts ! the innumerable cedar cones  
Of Lebanon must lull you now no longer ;  
Nor fall of Empires with as soft a sound.  
O'er famed Colonos stoop no more in trance,  
Eyeing the city towers. No longer muse,  
With mind divided, though a single heart,  
On legend—true or erring ! Earth can yield  
No scene more fair than this—and Nature's beauty  
Is ever irreproachable. Return !  
A long breath take of this ambrosial clime  
Ere lost the sweetness : sigh, yet be content :  
Fill here your golden urns ; be fresh for ever !

## XI.

I have beheld Mont Blanc ; in eminence,  
Though seated, over all his standing sons,  
Unearthly Eremite whose cell is Heaven ;  
His glacier beard forth-streaming to his feet  
Beyond his cloudy raiment. I have gazed  
On Rome ; have watched it from the Alban hill ;  
Have marked that dome supreme, its mitred crown,  
Dilate at sunset o'er the Latian bounds.  
Byzantium I have seen ; first capital

That owned the Faith ; whose rising up once more  
Shall be as mighty gates their ' heads uplifting'  
O'er all the earth, ' for God to enter in.'  
These three have I beheld : to these henceforth  
I add a fourth to stand with these for ever.  
On rock or tree my name I dare not trace—  
Delphi ! stamp thou thine image on my heart.

*THE DIGNITY OF SORROW.*

## I.

I HAVE not seen you since the Shadow fell  
From Heaven against your door :  
I know not if you bear your Sorrow well :  
I only know your hearth is cold ; your floor  
Will hear that soft and gliding tread no more.

## II.

I know our ancient friendship now is over :  
I can love still, and so will not complain :  
I have not loved in vain ;  
Taught long that Art of Sadness to discover  
Which draws stern solace from the wells of Pain.  
You love the Dead alone ; or you have lost  
The power and life of Love in Time's untimely frost.

## III.

You have stood up in the great Monarch's court—  
The court of Death: in spirit you have seen  
His lonely shades serene  
Where all the mighty men of old resort.  
The eyes of Proserpine,  
Heavy and black, have rested upon thine.  
Her vintage, wine from laurel-berries prest,  
You raised—and laid you then the dark urn down,  
Scared by that Queen's inevitable frown,  
Just as the marble touched your panting breast?  
Oh! in the mirror of that poison cold  
What Shadow or what Shape did you behold?

## IV.

And she is dead: and you have long been dying:  
And are recovered, and live on! O Friend!  
Say, what shall be the end  
Of leaf-lamenting boughs and wintry sighing?  
When will the woods that moan  
Resume their green array?  
When will the dull, sad clouds be overblown,  
And a calm sunset close our stormy day?

## V.

My thoughts pursue you still. I call them back.  
Once more they seek you, like the birds that rise  
Up from their reeds, and in a winding track  
Circle the field wherein their forage lies;—  
Or like some poor and downcast Pensioner,  
Depressed and timid, though his head be grey,

That moves with curving steps to greet his  
Lord,  
Whom he hath watched all day—  
Yet lets him pass away without a word ;  
And gazes on his footsteps from afar.

## SONG.

## I.

A BRIGHTENED Sorrow veils her face,  
Sweet thoughts with thoughts forlorn,  
And playful sadness, like the grace  
Of some autumnal morn ;  
When birds new-waked, like sprightly elves,  
The languid echoes rouse,  
And infant Zephyrs make themselves  
Familiar with old boughs.

## II.

All round our hearts the Maiden's hair  
Its own soft shade doth fling :  
Her sigh perfumes the forest air,  
Like eve—but eve in Spring !  
When Spring precipitates her flow ;  
And Summer, swift to greet her,  
Breathes, every night, a warmer glow  
Half through the dusk to meet her.

*A WANDERER'S MUSINGS AT ROME.*

THANKS be to Heaven ! yon grove of sombre pines,  
Whose several tops, like feathers in one wing  
Folded o'er one another, hang in air,  
From the great City hides me ! From its sound,  
Low but mysterious, urgent, agitating,  
Not distance only, but those rifted walls  
Immense (how oft at noontide have I watched  
The long green lizard from their fissures glance,  
And glide from thicket-mantled tower to tower)  
Not less protect me. Thanks once more to Heaven !  
This nook in which I lie, this grassy isle  
Amid the burnt brake nested, hath no name :  
No legend haunts it. Unalarmed I turn,  
Confronted by no despot from the grave,  
By no inscription challenged. If this spot  
Was trod of old by consul or by King,  
It is my privilege to be ignorant :  
They lived and died. If here the Roman Twins  
Tugged at the she-wolf, they have had their day :  
Yon lambs have now their hour ; and I, a stranger,  
Following the path their feet have worn, here find  
Their cool recess, and share it. Pretty thrush !  
Possess thy soul in peace, and sing at will,  
Sharpening thy clear expostulating note,  
Or softening, 'mid the branches. Murmuring stream !  
Sufficient to solicit and reward  
An unconstrained attention, thou to me  
(A lover of the torrents ere I heard them)  
This day art dearer far than Alpine floods



In whose abysmal voices all the sounds  
Of all the vales are met and reconciled.  
From admiration I desire repose ;  
Rest from that household foe, a beating heart ;  
Yea, from all thought exemption, save such thoughts  
As, lightly wafted toward us, leave us lightly,  
And, like the salutation of those winds  
That curl yon ilex leaves, if sweets they bring,  
Bequeath a sweeter freshness. Three weeks since  
To me this dell of grass had seemed a prison,  
And hours here spent ignoblest apathy.  
The change ! whence comes it ? Fevered nights and  
days

Make answer ! Answer thou, mysterious City,  
Whose shade eclipsed the world a thousand years !  
Tomb, aqueduct, and porch I visited,  
And strove with adulating thoughts to clasp ;  
And could not : for as some vast tree, the sire  
Of woods, flings off the span of infant arms,  
So by its breadth and compass Rome rebuked  
My sympathies. The "lesser," verily,  
"Is of the greater blessed ;" and Love, a gift,  
Falls back, repulsed, from that which scorns its aid ;  
From that which, solitary in its vastness,  
Admits no measurement, nor condescends  
To be in portions grasped ; from that which yields  
No crevice to the climber's hand or foot ;  
Whose height o'erawes our winged aspirations,  
Like some steep cliff of ocean in whose shade  
The circling sea-birds wail. And yet, unable  
With soul-unburdening love to clasp thee, Rome,  
Much more was I unable to forget thee.

I mused in city wastes, where pitying Earth  
 Takes back into her breast huge fragments strewn  
 Around, like bones of savage beasts extinct :  
 From wreck to wreck I roamed : my very dreams  
 Nested in obscure haunts and vaults unhealthy :  
 Ruin on ruin pressed, rivals in death,  
 Like grave dislodging grave in churchyard choked :  
 Triumphant Pillar, and vainglorious Arch  
 Towered in blue sky : voluptuous Baths laid bare  
 Colossal vice : and one great\* Temple meet  
 For that promiscuous worship Statecraft loves,  
 Lifted its haughty dome and pillared front.  
 I sought Cornelia's house, but found instead  
 The Cæsars' Palace, and the Coliseum,  
 That theatre of blood, where sat enthroned,  
 Swollen with the rage of Roman merriment,  
 The Roman People—Earth's chief idol served  
 With human victims !

From its own excess  
 Triumphant Evil suffers confutation :  
 Not here where, tested by the extreme it reached,  
 The Imperial instinct stands unmasked—not here  
 Can the sword's conquests subjugate the soul.  
 A lucid interval perforce is ours,  
 By these memorials quelled. The race that here  
 Trod down their brethren daily, in their day  
 Might plead some poor excuse. Each war to them  
 Some singular necessity might urge,  
 Or final peace impledge : but we who stand

\* The Pantheon.

Outfaced by all the congregated trophies  
They reared that gloried in their shame ; who pace  
O'er Tullia's way to reach Domitian's halls ;  
Who in one choir behold the British Queen  
And earliest Sabine maid ; who hear at once  
The wail of Veii and the falling roofs  
Of Carthage, till monotonous becomes  
The cry of nations, and the tale of blood  
A tedious iteration ; we who scan,  
Marbled in Rome, the form of injured Earth,  
And trace her wounds, and count each accurate scar  
In that dread victim by Rome's talon and beak  
Grav'n and recorded—we are scantily moved  
On martial sway to dote. What magic, then,  
Draws us to Rome ? What Spirit bids the nations  
Send up their tribes to one Metropolis—  
To her whom many hate—whom many fear—  
Where lies the spell ? Luxurious wealth has spread  
No velvet o'er the Roman streets, nor hung  
The spoils of Cashmeer, Persia, Samarcand,  
On either side the way. No flattering dream  
Of Fame restored, and ancient life renewed,  
Looks forth from heaven into a young man's eyes,  
Then drops, and plants its tent on Tyber's bank.  
The tawny Tyber is no mountain rill  
Where Fancy slakes her thirst. The sage shrinks  
back,  
And in the Roman Sibyl's bleeding book  
Will read no line—  
The future here is mortgaged to the past ;  
Hope breathes no temporal promise o'er that plain  
On which malaria broods : amid the tombs

Her foot moves slowly ; and where Hope is lame  
The social forces languish.

Whence the spell  
That draws us, then, to Rome? In arms, no more  
It lives. Abides it ambushed then in Art?  
The reign of Art is over. To uprear  
A prostrate column on its crumbling base  
Is here her chief of triumphs ! Art is dead !  
Here as in every land. In death gold-robed  
Her soul-less body, stretched across the street,  
Blocks up the public ways. The artist's study,  
Of old a hermit's cell, where Mind recluse,  
Pillowed on stores aforesaid wrung from Thought  
By Passion, by Experience drawn from Life,  
Saw visions as in Patmos, and set forth  
The shapes it saw, is now a wrangling shop  
In all the regal cities of the world,  
For them that buy and sell. In ancient time  
The painter was a preacher, whose sage hand  
Pictured high thought. If Martyrdom that thought,  
The radiant face of confessor unmoved  
Expressed full well that death which is a birth  
Into the realms of light. If Faith that thought,  
Lo ! where St. Jerome, eremite and saint,  
A dweller among rocks, himself a rock,  
Wasted and gaunt, fast-worn, and vigil-blind,  
Dying, draws near in faith (with both hands clasped,  
And awe-struck lip) to Him the invisible,  
And on that " Last Communion " hanging, rests  
The weight of all his being ! If he mused  
On Purity, ah ! mark that seer (nor young,

Nor female) who a lily holds and reads  
Writ in its depths the life white-robed of them  
Who follow still the Lamb ! Art, Art of old,  
Handmaid of Faith—prophet that witness bore  
Of God, not self, nor came in her own name ;  
Initiate in the Ideal Truth that spans  
The actual scope of things, and thence advanced  
To stand great Nature's meek Interpreter ;  
Is now a painted Queen, and keeps her court  
In palace halls whose marble labyrinths  
Like cities peopled by a race of stone,  
Branch forth unnumbered. Breathlessly we turn ;  
And sigh for stillness, sigh for utter peace,  
For darkness, or assuasive twilight drawn  
In dewy gentleness o'er pastures broad  
Whose cool serenity of blue and green  
Lures the tense spirit forth, and in a bath  
Of relaxation soft soothes and contents it—  
Too much of ostentatious aid unasked !  
Are we so weak within ? Can we advance  
No step without a crutch ? no lessons learn,  
Save lessons thrust upon us ? Can we catch  
In Nature's music manifold no voice  
But sad confessions of her nothingness ?  
Trust we in dead things only ? Nature lives !  
Her moving clouds, the rapture of her waves,  
Her rural haunts domestic—nooks sun-warmed,  
Endeared to babe and greybeard—her expanse  
Of fruitful plains, with hamlet, hall, and tower,  
Homestead and hedge, in autumn's glistening air  
Drawn out at eve, or by the ferment dazed  
Of summer sunrise, or on vernal noon

Melting in pearly distance like our dreams  
For man's far welfare ; her mysterious glens,  
That with the substance of one shade are thronged,  
And other habitant have none, that speak  
Of God and God alone, transfix the heart  
With wisdom less imposed on man than won  
From man's resources. Nature's demonstrations,  
Maternal, not scholastic, need have none  
Of diagram. Her own face is their proof,  
Subduing in the pathos of its smiles,  
Or power of eye : and being infinite,  
Her life is all in every part ; her lore  
In lowliest shape is perfect. Thou, frail flower,  
Anemone ! that near my grassy couch,  
By a breath shaken which I scarcely feel,  
Thy gracious head as though in worship bowest  
Down on thy mother's lap—in thee, in thee  
(I seek no further) lives that Power supreme,  
Whereof the artists boast. Immaculate Beauty  
In thy humility doth dominate,  
Is of thy tremblings proud, and, gladly clothed  
In thy thin garb of colors and fair forms,  
Looks up and smiles. I pluck thee from thy bed—  
Lie lightly on a breast that weary grows  
Of haughtier burdens ! Cool a fevered heart,  
That seeking better things hath sought in vain !  
Be thou my monitor : let me sum up.  
What have I chiefly learned from human life ?  
That life as brief as thine is to be praised :  
That life's best blessings are the joys we tread  
To death unseen, chasing inventions vain :  
That He who made thee, made the heavens and earth,

And man; and that in Him is life alone;  
To serve Him freedom and to know Him peace.—  
Thine ancestress that bloomed in Paradise,  
Possessed no softer voice to celebrate  
(Joining the visual chorus of all worlds)  
Her great Creator's glory!

Hark that peal!

From countless domes that high in sunlight shake,  
A thousand bells roll forth their harmonies:  
The City, by the noontide flame oppressed,  
And sheltered long in sleep, awakes. Even now,  
Along the Pincian steep, with youthful step  
To dignity subdued, collegiate trains  
Precede their grave preceptors. Courts grass-grown,  
That echoed long some fountain's lonely splash,  
Now ring more loudly, by the red wheels dinned  
Of prince, or prelate of the Church intent  
On some majestic Rite. That peal again!  
And now the linked Procession moves abroad,  
Untwining slowly its voluminous folds:  
It pauses—through the dusky archway drawn,  
It vanishes—upcoiled at last, and still,  
Girdling the Coliseum's central Cross,  
The sacred pageant rests. With stealthy motion  
So slid the Esculapian snake of old  
Forth from the darkness. In Hesperian isle  
So rested, coiled around the mystic stem,  
The watcher of the fruit. The day draws on:  
The multitudinous thrill of quickening life  
Vibrates through all the city, while its blood  
Flows back from vein to vein. That sound prevails



In convent walks by rustling robe trailed o'er ;  
Like hum of insects unbeheld it throbs  
Through orange-scented, cloistral gardens dim ;  
It deepens with the concourse onward borne  
Between those statued saints that guard thy bridge,  
St. Angelo, and past the Adrian Tomb  
Where at the Church's foot an Empire sleeps ;  
It swells within those Colonnades whose arms  
Receive once more the concourse from all lands—  
The lofty English noble, student pale  
From Germany, diplomatist from France,  
Far Grecian patriarch, or Armenian priest,  
Or Royal Exile. From thy marble roofs,  
St. Peter's, in whose fastnesses abide,  
Like Arab tribe encamped, the bands ordained  
To guard them from the aggressive elements—  
From those ærial roofs to whispering depths  
Of crypts where kneels the cowed monk alone,  
The murmur spreads like one broad wind that  
lifts,

Ere morn the sighing shrouds of fleet becalmed :  
The churches fill ; the relics forth are brought :  
Screened by rich fretwork the monastic apse  
Resounds the hoarse chant, like an ocean cave :  
And long ere yet those obelisks which once  
Shadowed the Nile, o'er courts Basilican  
Project their evening shades, like silver stars  
Before white altars glimmering lights shall burn,  
And solitary suppliants lift their hands  
To Christ, for ever Present, to His Saints,  
And to His Martyrs, whom the Catacombs  
Hid in their sunless bosoms.



Rome, O Rome !

Surely thy Strength is here ! Three hundred years  
The faithful people lived among the Tombs ;  
The Catacombs were their Metropolis.  
There in the darkness thirty Pontiffs ruled ;  
There won the crown of martyrdom. The Rite,  
Dread, and tremendous, yoking earth and heaven,  
The Christian Sacrifice, was offered there,  
A tomb the altar, and, for relics, blood  
Of him who last confessed. The pictured walls  
To Mary and to Peter witness still.  
Here is thy Strength, O Rome ! Sun-clad, above,  
The Emperor triumphed, and the People triumphed !  
The Nubian lion, and the Lybian pard  
Roared for their prey ! Above thy tawny wave,  
Tyber, the world's increase went up each day :  
Daily from Rome the Legions passed whose arms  
Flashed back in turn the sunrise of all lands :  
Through every gate the embassies of Kings  
Advanced with gifts. But in the Catacombs  
The Faithful People, circled by their dead,  
Worshipped their God in peace. Three hundred years  
Passed like three days : and lo ! that Power went forth  
Which conquered Death. Then Hell gave up her prey :  
That hour the kingdoms of this world became  
The kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ :  
The Prince of this world, from his throne, upreared  
On subject thrones of every land, was hurled :  
The Pagan victories then their meaning found :  
The Empire last and mightiest that absorbed  
All its precursors, lay a ruin : God  
His Family on earth a Kingdom made,

And Sion built on buried Babylon !  
The Sacrament of Obedience paid to God  
Through Man, His Vicar, glorified that hour,  
Subjection ; and the Apostles reigned at Rome—  
Reigned from their tombs, and conquered from their  
dust !

Behold the mystery of the ages ! Man  
Wrought it unconscious ! History is mad,  
Or finds its meaning here. One mystery vast  
Solves here Philosophy's uncounted riddles :  
Time with its tumults here is harmonized :  
Hope here is found or nowhere !

As a mist  
That strives no longer, swept by quiring winds  
From some peak'd mountain, my oppression leaves  
me !  
Great Rome is mine at last ! Refreshed I rise ;  
And gales of life from that celestial bourne  
Whereto we tend strike on me. With soft shock  
Yon almond bower lets fall its summer snow,  
The sun is setting. The despotic day  
Which, blessing earth with increase, suffered none  
To lift a grateful eye, hath heard his doom ;  
And round him folds his robes, blood-stained and  
golden,  
With dignity to die. Like haughty hopes  
From one reduced by sickness, from the clouds  
Their pageantries are melting : and ere long  
No hue save that translucent, tender green,  
Will speak of pomps gone by. The increasing wind,  
Incumbent on the pine-grove's summit broad,

Gathers in volumed strength : within its vaults  
An omnipresent and persistent whisper  
Waxes in loudness. Well, might I believe  
The hosts angelic, who with guardian care,  
Urging belike the seasons in their course,  
Circle the earth, even now on wings outspread  
Were rustling o'er me, countless as sea-sands.  
Glorious and blessed Armies ! free ye are  
From man's uncertainties, and free not less  
From man's illusions ! Passing in one flight  
Calpë and Athens—all that makes renowned  
This many-mountained, many-citied globe,  
To you our schemes of worldly rule must seem  
Like some poor maniac's towers in charcoal sketched  
(Airy possession) on his cell's bare wall ;  
Our science like that knowledge won from touch  
By one born blind ; our arts like gems minute,  
Poor fragments crumbled from your spheres eterne !  
Pity us, then, bright Spirits, for ye know  
The weakness of our strength ; the poverty  
Ye know, which we for wealth misdeem—exchanging  
The gold of Truth Unchangeable and One  
(Shared, not divided) for the baser coin  
Of Truth in portions, scattered through the world.  
Ye know the sad vacuity of hearts  
With trifles filled, and thence from Him averse  
In love for Whom is clasped the love of all things,  
And their possession. Starlike in your ken,  
By distance, and the barriers of the nations,  
And all that haze which men call ancientness,  
Unfooled ye are. For you the Church of God,  
Unwrinkled as the ocean, wears for aye

Her Pentecostal glory. All things that live,  
And die not—all Realities divine,  
Live in the light of an eternal Present  
And prime perpetual. Him whom we revere  
As patriarch, ye behold a white-haired babe,  
Poor, heaven-protected infant of fourscore :  
His course accomplished, still in him ye note  
His mother's new delight—a bud dried up ;  
Dropt from the human stem at noon ; ere night  
Blown forth into the darkness. Spirits blest !  
The sun that runs before you rises ever ;  
For ever sets ; reigns ever throned at noon :  
Past, Present, Future mingle in your sight,  
And Time its tortuous stream spreads to a lake  
Girt by, and imaging, Eternity,  
Between whose mirror and the infinite vault  
Ye in the radiance bask !

Bask on, bright Spirits !  
Bathe in the beam of Godhead ; or fulfil  
With awe your ministries of love, in Man  
That seeing which they saw not who of old  
The Galilean mocked. By death absolved—  
By perfected Obedience rendered free,  
Man o'er the ruins of the world shall rise ;  
Yea, from the height of heaven, the throne of God,  
Shall gaze upon a universe renewed—  
His Image o'er that universe shall cast  
And o'er your shining hosts—his hand shall raise ;  
And, with the Voice Supreme blending his own,  
Shall bless you, and pronounce you “very good.”

## SONG.

HE found me sitting among flowers,  
My Mother's, and my own ;  
Whiling away too happy hours  
With songs of doleful tone.

My Sister came, and laid her book  
Upon my lap : and He,  
He too into the page would look,  
And asked no leave of me.

The little frightened creature laid  
Her face upon my knee—  
“You teach your sister, pretty maid ;  
And I would fain teach thee.”

He taught me Joy more blest, more brief  
Than that mild vernal weather :  
He taught me Love ; he taught me Grief :  
He taught me both together.

Give me a sun-warmed nook to cry in !  
And a wall-flower's perfume—  
A nook to cry in, and to die in,  
'Mid the Ruin's gloom.

## PERSECUTION.

## I.

THERE was silence in the heavens  
When the Son of Man was led  
From the Garden to the Judgment ;  
Sudden silence, strange, and dread !  
All along the empyreal coasts,  
On their knees the immortal hosts  
Watched, with sad and wondering eyes,  
That tremendous sacrifice.

## II.

There was silence in the heavens  
When the Priest his garment tore ;  
Silence when that Twain accursed  
Their false witness faintly bore.  
Silence (though a tremor crept  
O'er their ranks) the Angels kept  
While that judge, dismayed though proud,  
Wash'd his hands before the crowd.

## III.

But when Christ His cross was bearing,  
Fainting oft, by slow degrees,  
Then went forth the angelic thunder,  
Of legions rising from their knees.

Each bright Spirit grasped a brand;  
And lightning flashed from band to band:  
An instant more had launched them forth,  
Avenging terrors, to the earth.

IV.

Then from God there fell a glory,  
Round and o'er that multitude;  
And by every fervent Angel  
With hushing hand another stood—  
Another, never seen before,  
Stood one moment and no more!  
—Peace, brethren, peace! to us is given  
Suffering: vengeance is for Heaven!

*LINES WRITTEN BESIDE THE LAGO  
VARESE.*

(See Henry Taylor's Poem, entitled "Lago Varese.")

I.

STILL rise around that lake well sung  
New growths as boon and good  
As when, by sunshine saddened, long  
Beside its margin stood  
That northern youth, and o'er it breathed a lay  
Which praised things beauteous, mourning their decay.

II.

As then great Nature, "kind to sloth,"  
 Lets drop o'er all the land  
 Her gifts, the fair and fruitful both,  
 Into the sleeper's hand :  
 On golden ground once more she paints as then  
 The cistus bower, and convent-brighten'd glen.

III.

Still o'er the flashing waters lean  
 The mulberry and the maize,  
 And roof of vines whose purple screen  
 Tempers those piercing rays,  
 Which here forego their fiercer shafts, and sleep,  
 Subdued, in crimson cells, and verdurous chambers  
 deep.

IV.

And still in many a sandy creek  
 Light waves run on and up,  
 While the foam-bubbles winking break  
 Around their channell'd cup :  
 Against the rock they toss the bleeding gourd,  
 Or fret on marble stair and skiff unmoor'd.

V.

Fulfill'd thus far the Poet's words :—  
 And yet a truth, that hour  
 By him unsung, upon his chords  
 Descends, their ampler dower.



Of Nature's cyclic life he sang, nor knew  
That frailer shape he mourn'd should bloom perpetual too.

VI.

There still—not skilful to retract  
A glance as kind as keen—  
By the same southern sunset back'd  
There still that Maid is seen :  
Through song's high grace there stands she ! from  
her eyes  
Still beams the cordial mirth, the unshamed surprise !

VII.

Not yet those parted lips remit  
A smile that grows and grows :  
The Titianic morning yet  
Breaks from that cheek of rose :  
Still from her locks the breeze its sweetness takes :—  
Around her white feet still the ripple fawns and  
rakes.

VIII.

And, bright'ning in the radiance cast  
By her on all around,  
That shore lives on, while song may last,  
Love-consecrated ground ;  
Lives like that isthmus, headland half, half isle,  
Which smiled to meet Catullus' homeward smile.

IX.

O Sirmio ! thou that shedd'st thy fame  
O'er old Verona's lake,

Henceforth Varese without blame  
 Thine honors shall partake :  
 A Muse hath sung her, on whose front with awe  
 Thy nymphs had gazed as though great Virtue's  
 self they saw !

X.

What Shape is that, though fair severe,  
 Which fleets triumphant by  
 Imaged in yonder mirror clear,  
 And seeks her native sky,  
 With locks succinct beneath a threat'ning crest—  
 Like Juno in the brow, like Pallas in the breast ?

XI.

A Muse that flatters nothing base  
 In man, nor aught infirm,  
 "Sows the slow olive for a race  
 Unborn." The destined germ,  
 The germ alone of Fame she plants, nor cares  
 What time that secular tree its deathless fruitage  
 bears ;

XII.

Pleased rather with her function sage—  
 To interpret Nature's heart ;  
 The words on Wisdom's sacred page  
 To wing, through metric art,  
 With life ; and in a chariot of sweet sound  
 Down-trodden Truth to lift, and waft, the world  
 around.

## XIII.

Hail Muse, whose crown, soon won or late,  
Is Virtue's, not thine own!

Hail Verse, that tak'st thy strength and state  
From Thought's august throne!

Varese too would hail thee! Hark that song—  
Her almond bowers it thrills and rings her groves  
along!

October 4, 1856.

*LINES WRITTEN NEAR SHELLEY'S  
HOUSE AT LERICI.*

DEDICATED TO J. W. FIELD, ESQ., IN MEMORY OF  
A DAY PASSED WITH HIM AT LERICI.

## I.

AND here he paced! These glimmering pathways  
strewn

With faded leaves his light swift footsteps crush'd;  
The odor of yon pine was o'er him blown:

Music went by him in each wind that brush'd  
Those yielding stems of ilex! Here, alone,

He walk'd at noon, or silent stood and hush'd  
When the ground-ivy flash'd the moonlight sheen  
Back from the forest carpet always green.

## II.

Poised as on air the lithe elastic bower  
Now bends, resilient now against the wind  
Recoils, like Dryads that one moment cower  
And rise the next with loose locks unconfined.  
Through the dim roof like gems the sunbeams shower ;  
Old cypress trunks the aspiring bay-trees bind,  
And soon will have them wholly underneath :  
Types eminent of glory conquering death.

## III.

Far down upon the shelves and sands below  
The respirations of a southern sea  
Beat with susurrent cadence, soft and slow :  
Round the grey cave's fantastic imagery,  
In undulation eddying to and fro,  
The purple waves on roll or backward flee ;  
While, dew'd at each rebound with gentlest shock,  
The myrtle leans her green breast on the rock.

## IV.

And here he stood ; upon his face that light,  
Stream'd from some furthest realm of luminous  
thought,  
Which clothed his fragile beauty with the might  
Of suns for ever rising ! Here he caught  
Visions divine. He saw in fiery flight  
"The hound of Heaven," with heavenly vengeance  
fraught,

"Run down the slanted sunlight of the morn"—\*  
Prometheus frown on Jove with scorn for scorn.

V.

He saw white Arethusa, leap on leap,  
Plunge from the Acroceraunian ledges bare  
With all her torrent streams, while from the steep  
Alpheus bounded on her unaware :  
Hellas he saw, a giant fresh from sleep,  
Break from the night of bondage and despair.  
Who but had sung as there he stood and smiled  
"Justice and truth have found their winged child !"†

VI.

Through cloud and wave and star his insight keen  
Shone clear, and traced a God in each disguise,  
Protean, boundless. Like the buskinn'd scene  
All Nature rapt him into ecstasies :  
In him, alas ! had Reverence equal been  
With Admiration, those resplendent eyes  
Had wander'd not through all her range sublime  
To miss the one great marvel of all time.

VII.

The winds sang loud ; from this Elysian nest  
He rose, and trod yon spine of mountains bleak,  
While stormy suns descending in the west  
Stain'd as with blood yon promontory's beak.

\* Prometheus Unbound.

† Revolt of Islam.

That hour, responsive to his soul's unrest,  
 Carrara's marble summits, peak to peak,  
 Sent forth their thunders like the battle-cry  
 Of nations arming for the victory.

## VIII.

Visions that hour more fair more false he saw  
 Than those the mythologic heaven that throng;  
 Mankind he saw exempt from faith and law,  
 Move godlike forth, with science wing'd and song;  
 He saw the Peoples spurn religious awe,  
 Yet tower aloft through inbred virtue strong.  
 Ah Circe! not for sensualists alone  
 Thy cup! It dips full oft in Helicon!

## IX.

Mankind he saw one equal brotherhood,  
 All things in common held as light and air!—  
 "Vinum demonum!"—Just, and wise, and good—  
 Were man all this, such freedom man might bear!  
 The slave creates the tyrant! In man's blood  
 Sin lurks, a panther couchant in his lair.  
 Nature's confession came before the Creed's;—  
 Authority is still man's first of needs.

## X.

All things in common; equal all; all free!  
 Not fancies these, but gifts reserved in trust.  
 A spiritual growth is Liberty;  
 Nature, unnatural made through hate and lust,  
 Yields it no more or chokes her progeny  
 With weeds of foul desire or fell disgust.

Convents have all things common : but on Grace  
They rest. Inverted systems lack a base.

XI.

The more obedience to a law divine  
Tempers the chaos of man's heart, the less  
Becomes his need of outward discipline  
The balance of injustice to redress.  
"Wild Bacchanals of Truth's mysterious wine"\*  
Must bear the Mænad's waking bitterness.  
Anticipate not heaven. Not great thy worth  
Heaven without holiness, and heaven on earth !

XII.

Alas ! the errors thus to truth so near  
That sovereign truths they are, though misap-  
plied,  
Errors to pure but passionate natures dear,  
Errors by aspirations glorified,  
Errors with radiance crown'd like Lucifer  
Ere fall'n, like him to darkness changed through  
pride,  
These of all errors are the heart and head ;—  
The strength of life is theirs ; yet they are dead !

XIII.

That Truth Reveal'd, by thee in madness spurn'd,  
Plato, thy master in the walks of light,  
Had knelt to worship ! For its day he yearn'd  
Through the long hungry watches of the night :

\* Shelley's Ode to Liberty.

Its dawn in Thought's assumptions he discern'd  
 Silvering hoar contemplation's star-loved height :  
 The God-Man came ! Alas ! thy phantasy,  
 A Man-God feigning, storm'd against His sky.

## XIV.

Sorrowing for thee, with sorrow joy is mix'd,  
 With triumph shame ! Our hopes themselves are  
     sad ;  
 But fitful lustres break the shades betwixt ;  
     So gleams yon olive bower, in mourning clad,  
 And yet at times with showery gleams transfix'd,  
     That opal among trees which grave or glad  
 Its furtive splendor half reveal'd or wholly  
 Shoots ever from a base of melancholy.

## XV.

Our warfare is in darkness. Friend for foe  
     Blindly, and oft with swords exchanged, we strike :  
 Opinion guesses : Faith alone can know  
     Where actual and illusive still are like.  
 Thine was that strength which fever doth bestow ;  
     The madness thine of one that, fever-sick,  
 Beats a sad mother in distemper'd sleep :  
 Perhaps death woke thee, on her breast to weep !

## XVI.

Thee from that Mother sins ancestral tore !—  
     No heart hadst thou, from Faith's sole guide remote,  
 With statutable worship to adore,  
     Or learn a nation-licensed Creed by rote ;



No heart to snatch thy gloss of sacred lore  
From the blind prophet of the public vote.  
Small help from such in life, or when thy pyre  
Cast far o'er reddening waves its mirror'd fire !

## XVII.

Hark ! She thou knew'st not mourns thee ! Slowly  
tolls,

As sinks the sun, yon church-tower o'er the sea :  
Abroad once more the peal funereal rolls,

And Spezzia now responds to Lericì.  
This day is sacred to Departed Souls ;

This day the Dead alone are great ; and we  
Who live, or seem to live, but live to plead  
For the departed myriads at their need.

## XVIII.

Behold, the long procession scales the rock ;

In the red glare dusk banners sadly wave !

Behold, the lambs of the immaculate flock

Fling flowers on noted and on noteless grave !

O Cross ! sole Hope that dost not woo to mock !

Some, some that knew thee not thou liv'st to save—

All spirits not wholly—by their own decree—

From infinite Love exiled, and lost to thee !

! All Souls' Day, 1856.

## SONNETS.

## IRISH COLONIZATION.\*

1848.

## I.

ENGLAND, thy sinful past hath found thee out !  
Washed was the blood-stain from the perfumed  
hand :  
O'er lips self-righteous smiles demure and bland  
Flickered, though still thine eye betrayed a doubt,  
When round thy palace rose a People's shout—  
"Famine makes lean the Helots' helpless land."  
What made them Helots? Gibbet, scourge, and brand,  
Plaguing with futile rage a Faith devout.  
England ! six hundred tyrannous years and more,  
Trampling a prostrate realm, that strength out-trod,  
Which twenty years availed not to restore.  
Thou wert thy brother's keeper—from the sod  
His life-blood crieth. Expiate thou that crime,  
Or bear a branded brow throughout all time.

## II.

Fell the tall pines !—thou nobler Argo, leap,  
Wide-winged deliverer, on the ocean floods ;  
And westward waft the astonished multitudes

\* State assistance to Emigration, if conceded during the Famine years, would have diminished the necessity for that enormous emigration witnessed subsequently to them, while it also diminished the mortality which accompanied the Emigration of those years.

That rot inert, and hideous Sabbath keep ;  
Or, stung to madness, guiltier ruin heap  
On their own heads. No longer fabled Gods  
Subdue vexed waves with tridents and pearl rods ;  
Yet round that bark heroic Gods shall sweep,  
And guard an infant Nation. Hope shall flush  
With far Hesperean welcome billows hoary :  
Valor and virtue, love and joy, and glory,  
A storm-borne Iris, shall before you rush ;  
And there descending, where your towers shall stand,  
Look back, full-faced, and shout, "Britannia, land !"

## III.

I heard, in deep prophetic trance immersed,  
The wave, keel-cut, kissing the ship's dark side :—  
Anon men shouted, and the cliffs replied :  
O what a vision from the darkness burst !  
Europe so fair a city never nursed  
As met me there ! It clasped in crescent wide  
The gulf, it crowned the isles, the subject tide  
O'er-strode with bridges, and with quays coerced.  
In marble from unnumbered mountains robed,  
With altar-shaped Acropolis and crest,  
There sat the queenly City, throned and globed :  
Full well that beaming countenance expressed  
The soul of a great people. From its eye  
Shone forth a second Britain's empery.

## IV.

How looks a mother on her babe, a bard  
On some life-labored song ? With humble pride,  
And self-less love, and joy to awe allied :—

So should a State that severed self regard,  
Her child beyond the waves. Great Nature's ward,  
And Time's, that child one day, with God for guide,  
Shall waft its parent's image far and wide;  
Yea, and its Maker's, if by sin unmarred.

Conquest I deem a vulgar pastime : trade  
Shifts like the winds ; and power but comes to go :  
But this is glorious, o'er the earth to sow  
The seed of Nations : darkness to invade  
With light : to plant, where silence reigned and death,  
The thrones of British law and towers of Christian  
faith.

## V.

England, magnanimous art thou in name :  
Magnanimous in nature once thou wert ;  
But that which ofttimes lags behind desert,  
And crowns the dead, as oft survives it—fame.  
Can she whose hand a merchant's pen makes tame,  
Or sneer of nameless scribe ; can she whose heart  
In camp or senate still is at the mart,  
A Nation's toils, a Nation's honors claim ?  
Thy shield of old torn Poland twice and thrice  
Invoked : thy help as vainly Ireland asks,  
Pointing with stark, lean finger, from the crest  
Of western cliffs plague-stricken, to the West—  
Grey-haired though young. When heat is sucked  
from ice,  
Then shall a Firm discharge a Nation's tasks.

THE YEAR OF SORROW—IRELAND—1849.

I.—SPRING.

I.

ONCE more, through God's high will, and grace  
Of hours that each its task fulfils,  
Heart-healing Spring resumes her place,  
The valley throngs and scales the hills;

II.

In vain. From earth's deep heart o'ercharged  
The exulting life runs o'er in flowers;  
The slave unfed is unenlarged:  
In darkness sleep a Nation's powers.

III.

Who knows not Spring? Who doubts, when blows  
Her breath, that Spring is come indeed?  
The swallow doubts not; nor the rose  
That stirs, but wakes not; nor the weed.

IV.

I feel her near, but see her not;  
For these with pain uplifted eyes  
Fall back repulsed, and vapors blot  
The vision of the earth and skies.

## V.

I see her not—I feel her near,  
As, charioted in mildest airs,  
She sails through yon empyreal sphere,  
And in her arms and bosom bears

## VI.

That urn of flowers and lustral dew  
Whose sacred balm, o'er all things shed,  
Revives the weak, the old renews,  
And crowns with votive wreaths the dead.

## VII.

Once more the cuckoo's call I hear;  
I know, in many a glen profound,  
The earliest violets of the year  
Rise up like water from the ground.

## VIII.

The thorn I know once more is white;  
And, far down many a forest dale,  
The anemones in dubious light  
Are trembling like a bridal veil.

## IX.

By streams released that singing flow  
From craggy shelf through sylvan glades  
The pale narcissus, well I know,  
Smiles hour by hour on greener shades.

X.

The honeyed cowslip tufts once more  
The golden slopes ; with gradual ray  
The primrose stars the rock, and o'er  
The wood-path strews its milky way.

XI.

From ruined huts and holes come forth  
Old men, and look upon the sky !  
The Power Divine is on the earth :  
Give thanks to God before ye die !

XII.

And ye, O children worn and weak !  
Who care no more with flowers to play,  
Lean on the grass your cold, thin cheek,  
And those slight hands, and whispering, say,

XIII.

“Stern Mother of a race unblest,  
“In promise kindly, cold in deed,—  
“Take back, O Earth, into thy breast,  
“The children whom thou wilt not feed.”

II.—SUMMER.

I.

APPROVED by works of love and might,  
The Year, consummated and crowned,  
Has scaled the zenith's purple height,  
And flings his robe the earth around.

## II.

Impassioned stillness—fervors calm—

Brood, vast and bright, o'er land and deep:  
The warrior sleeps beneath the palm;  
The dark-eyed captive guards his sleep.

## III.

The Iberian laborer rests from toil;  
Sicilian virgins twine the dance;  
Laugh Tuscan vales in wine and oil;  
Fresh laurels flash from brows of France.

## IV.

Far off, in regions of the North,  
The hunter drops his winter fur;  
Sun-stricken babes their feet stretch forth;  
And nested dormice feebly stir.

## V.

But thou, O land of many woes!  
What cheer is thine? Again the breath  
Of proved Destruction o'er thee blows,  
And sentenced fields grow black in death.

## VI.

In horror of a new despair  
His blood-shot eyes the peasant strains,  
With hands clenched fast, and lifted hair,  
Along the daily-darkening plains.



VII.

“Why trusted he to them his store?  
“Why feared he not the scourge to come?”  
Fool! turn the page of History o’er—  
The roll of Statutes—and be dumb!

VIII.

Behold, O People! thou shalt die!  
What art thou better than thy sires?  
The hunted deer a weeping eye  
Turns on his birthplace, and expires.

IX.

Lo! as the closing of a book,  
Or statue from its base o’erthrown,  
Or blasted wood, or dried-up brook,  
Name, race, and nation, thou art gone.

X.

The stranger shall thy hearth possess;  
The stranger build upon thy grave.  
But know this also—he, not less,  
His limit and his term shall have.

XI.

Once more thy volume, open cast,  
In thunder forth shall sound thy name;  
Thy forest, hot at heart, at last  
God’s breath shall kindle into flame.

## XII.

Thy brook dried up a cloud shall rise,  
And stretch an hourly widening hand,  
In God's good vengeance, through the skies,  
And onward o'er the Invader's land.

## XIII.

Of thine, one day, a remnant left  
Shall raise o'er earth a Prophet's rod,  
And teach the coasts of Faith bereft  
The names of Ireland, and of God.

## III.—AUTUMN.

## I.

THEN die, thou Year—thy work is done :  
The work ill done is done at last.  
Far off, beyond that sinking sun  
Which sets in blood, I hear the blast

## II.

That sings thy dirge, and says—"Ascend,  
"And answer make amid thy peers,  
(Since all things here must have an end,)  
"Thou latest of the famine years !"

## III.

I join that voice. No joy have I  
In all thy purple and thy gold ;  
Nor in that nine-fold harmony  
From forest on to forest rolled :

## IV.

Nor in that stormy western fire,  
Which burns on ocean's gloomy bed,  
And hurls, as from a funeral pyre,  
A glare that strikes the mountain's head ;

## V.

And writes on low-hung clouds its lines  
Of cyphered flame, with hurrying hand ;  
And flings amid the topmost pines  
That crown the steep, a burning brand.

## VI.

Make answer, Year, for all thy dead,  
Who found not rest in hallowed earth ;  
The widowed wife, the father fled,  
The babe age-stricken from his birth.

## VII.

Make answer, Year, for virtue lost ;  
For courage proof 'gainst fraud and force  
Now waning like a noontide ghost ;  
Affections poisoned at their source.

## VIII.

The laborer spurned his lying spade ;  
The yeoman spurned his useless plough ;  
The pauper spurned the unwholesome aid,  
Obtruded once, exhausted now.

## IX.

The roof-trees fall of hut and hall,  
I hear them fall, and falling cry,  
"One fate for each, one fate for all ;  
So wills the Law that willed a lie."

## X.

Dread power of Man ! what spread the waste  
In circles hour by hour more wide,  
And would not let the past be past ?—  
The Law that promised much, and lied.

## XI.

Dread power of God ! Whom mortal years  
Nor touch, nor tempt ; Who sitt'st sublime  
In night of night,—O bid thy spheres  
Resound at last a funeral chime !

## XII.

Call up at last the afflicted race,  
Whom man, not God, abolished.—Sore,  
For centuries, their strife : the place  
That knew them once shall know no more !

## IV.—WINTER.

## I.

FALL, snow, and cease not ! Flake by flake  
The decent winding-sheet compose.  
Thy task is just and pious ; make  
An end of blasphemies and woes.

II.

Fall flake by flake ! by thee alone,  
Last friend, the sleeping draught is given :  
Kind nurse, by thee the couch is strewn,  
The couch whose covering is from heaven.

III.

Descend and clasp the mountain's crest ;  
Inherit plain and valley deep :  
This night on thy maternal breast  
A vanquished nation dies in sleep.

IV.

Lo ! from the starry Temple Gates  
Death rides, and bears the flag of peace :  
The combatants he separates ;  
He bids the wrath of ages cease.

V.

Descend, benignant Power ! But O,  
Ye torrents, shake no more the vale :  
Dark streams, in silence seaward flow :  
Thou rising storm, remit thy wail.

VI.

Shake not, to-night, the cliffs of Moher,  
Nor Brandon's base, rough sea ! Thou Isle,  
The Rite proceeds ! From shore to shore,  
Hold in thy gathered breath the while.

## VII.

Fall, snow ! in stillness fall, like dew,  
On church's roof and cedar's fan ;  
And mould thyself on pine and yew ;  
And on the awful face of man.

## VIII.

Without a sound, without a stir,  
In streets and wolds, on rock and mound,  
O, omnipresent Comforter,  
By thee, this night, the lost are found !

## IX.

On quaking moor, and mountain moss  
With eyes upstaring at the sky,  
And arms extended like a cross,  
The long-expectant sufferers lie.

## X.

Bend o'er them, white-robed Acolyte !  
Put forth thine hand from cloud and mist ;  
And minister the last sad Rite,  
Where altar there is none, nor priest.

## XI.

Touch thou the gates of soul and sense ;  
Touch darkening eyes and dying ears ;  
Touch stiffening hands and feet, and thence  
Remove the trace of sins and tears.

## XII.

And ere thou seal those filmèd eyes,  
    Into God's urn thy fingers dip,  
And lay, 'mid eucharistic sighs,  
    The sacred wafer on the lip.

## XIII.

This night the Absolver issues forth :  
    This night the Eternal Victim bleeds :  
O winds and woods—O heaven and earth !  
    Be still this night. The Rite proceeds !

## WIDOWHOOD.

1848.

NOR thou alone, but all things fair and good,  
Live here bereft, in vestal widowhood,  
Or wane in radiant circlet incomplete.  
Memory, in widow's weeds, with naked feet,  
Stands on a tombstone. Hope, with tearful eyes,  
Stares all night long on unillumined skies.  
Virtue, an orphan, begs from door to door.  
Beside a cold hearth, on a stranger's floor,  
Sits exiled Honor. Song, a vacant type,  
Hangs on that tree, whose fruitage ne'er was ripe,  
Her harp, and bids the casual wind thereon  
Lament what might be, fabling what is gone.  
Our childhood's world of wonder melts like dew ;

Youth's guardian genius bids our youth adieu ;  
And oft the wedded is a widow too.  
The best of bridals here is but a troth,—  
Only in heaven is ratified the oath :  
There, there alone, is clasped in full fruition  
That sacred joy which passed not Eden's gates :  
For here the soul is mocked with dream and vision ;  
And outward sense, uniting, separates.  
The Bride of Brides, a maid and widow here,  
Invokes her Lord, and finds—a Comforter :—  
Her loftiest fane is but a visible porch  
To sealed Creation's omnipresent Church.

Zealous that nobler gifts than earth's should live,  
Fortune I praise—but praise her, fugitive.  
The Roman praised her permanent ;\* but we  
Have learned her lore (and paid a heavy fee),  
Have tracked her promise to its brake of wiles,  
And sounded all the shallows of her smiles.  
Fortune not gives but sells, and takes instead  
A heart made servile, and a discrowned head.  
Too soon she comes, and drowns in swamps of sloth  
The soul contemplative and active—both ;  
Or comes too late, and, with malignant art,  
Leaps on the lance that rives the sufferer's heart,  
Showering her affluence on a breast supine.  
Her best of gifts the usurer's seal and sign  
Sustain, and pawn man's life to Destiny.  
Ah ! mightier things than man like man can die !

\* "Laudo manentem."—HORACE.



Between the ruin and the work half done  
I sit : the raw wreck is the sorrier one  
Here drops old Desmond's Keep in slow decay :  
There the unfinished Mole is washed away.  
The moment's fickle promise, and the vast  
And consummated greatness,—both are past.  
We sink, and none is better for our fall :  
We suffer most : but suffering comes to all :  
Our sighs but echoes are of earlier sighs ;  
And in our agonies we plagiarize.  
O'er all the earth old States in ruin lie,  
And new Ambitions topple from their sky :  
Greatness walks lame while clad in mortal mould ;  
The good are weak—unrighteous are the bold.  
Love by Self-love is murdered, or Distrust ;  
And earth-born Virtue has its "dust to dust."  
This Ireland knows. The famine years go by,  
And each its ranks of carnage heaps more high :  
What voice once manly and what hand once strong  
Arraigns, resists, or mitigates the wrong ?  
The future shall be as the present hour :  
The havoc past, again the slaves of Power  
Shall boast because once more the harvest waves  
In fraudulent brightness o'er a million graves.  
Why weep for ties once ours, relaxed or broken ?  
If weep we must, our tears are all bespoken :  
One thing is worthy of them, one alone—  
A world's inherent baseness, and our own.

Type of my country, sad, and chaste, and wise !  
Forgive the gaze of too regardful eyes :

I saw the black robe and the aspect pale,  
 And heard in dream that country's dying wail.  
 Like Night her form arose,—as shades in night  
 Are lost, thy sorrowing beauty vanished from my  
 sight.

*THE IRISH GAEL TO THE IRISH NORMAN,\**

OR, THE LAST IRISH CONFISCATION.

1850.

YOUR bark in turn is freighted. O'er the seas  
 You seek a refuge at the Antipodes.  
 Australia waits you. O my Lord, beware !  
 Australia ! Floats not England's standard there ?  
 Tyrconnell and Tyrone found rest more nigh :  
 Shrined on Saint Peter's Mount† their ashes lie.  
 Their cause is mine—and foes, till now, were we ;  
 Now friends, ashamed were I thy shame to see.  
 Has Ruin no decorum ? Grief no sense ?  
 Shall England house thee ? England drives thee  
 hence !

\* Toward the end of the Irish Famine many estates were precipitated on the market and sold for half their value, owing to a course of legislation which their proprietors denounced as confiscation. This poem was written on hearing that a nobleman thus suddenly reduced to ruin was about to emigrate to Australia. It is dramatic in its scope, and represents the feelings with which the descendant of some great House dispossessed in old times might contemplate the ruin of one belonging to the later Race.

† San Pietro in Montorio.

O worker of thy sorrows, with a vow  
Bind thou that head reduced, and careful brow,  
Wholly to root that idol from thy heart :  
Swear that thy race never shall have a part  
In aught that England boasts, achieves, confers :  
Her past is thine—thy future is no<sup>t</sup> hers.

Loosed from the agony of fruitless strife  
You stand, a lost man 'mid the wreck of life,  
And round you gaze. Sad Eva also gazed  
All round that bridal field of blood, amazed ;—  
Spoused to new fortunes. But your head is gray !  
Beyond your castle droops the dying day ;  
And, drifting down loose gusts of wailing wind,  
Night comes, with rain before and frost behind.  
Lean men that groped for sea-weeds on the shore  
All day, now hide in holes on fen and moor.  
The cliffs lean forth their brows to meet the scourge  
Of blast on blast : around their base the surge  
Welters in shades from iron headlands thrown :  
Through chasm and cave subaqueous thunders moan—  
That sound thou lov'st ! Once more the Desmonds  
fall :

To-night old Wrongs shake hands in History's hall ;  
And, clashing through responsive vaults of Time,  
Old peals funereal marry chime to chime.  
Of such no more ! Beside your fireless hearth  
Sit one night yet : and, moody or in mirth,  
Compare the past and present, and record  
The fortunes of your Order in a word.  
England first used, then spurned it ! Hour by hour,  
For centuries her laws, her fame, her power

Hung on its hand. It gloried to sustain,  
 High o'er the clouds that sweep the Atlantic main,  
 The banner with her blazonries enrolled :  
 Then came the change, and ye were bought and sold :  
 Then came the change, and ye received your due.  
 Sir, to your country had ye proved as true  
 As to your England, she had held by you :  
 Ruin ye might have proved ; ye might have known  
 Even then, the scorn of others—not your own !

Pardon hard words. Your Race, not mine, is hard :  
 But wounds and work the hand too soft have scarred :  
 We are your elders—first-born in distress ;  
 And century-seasoned woes grow pitiless.  
 Hierarchs are we in pain, where ye but learn :  
 We have an Uction, and our Rite is stern.  
 If on our brows still hang ancestral glooms,  
 Forgive the children of the Catacombs.  
 What have the dead to do with love or ruth ?  
 I died ; and live once more—I live for Truth :  
 Hope and delusion trouble me no more :  
 Therefore, expatriate on my native shore,  
 Anguish and doubt shake other nerves, not mine :  
 I drop no tear into the bitter brine :  
 The world in which I move is masculine.

Why to Australia ? Britain too was dear—  
 Must, then, the Britain of the southern sphere  
 Rack you in turn ? Seek you once more to prove  
 The furies of a scorned, unnatural love  
 That cleaves to insult, and on injury feeds,  
 And, upon both cheeks stricken, burns and bleeds ?

Son of the North, why seek you not once more  
The coasts where sang the warrior Scald of yore ?  
If unhistoric regions you must tread,  
Hallowed by no communion with the dead,  
Never by saint, or sage, or hero trod ;  
Where never lifted fane upraised to God  
In turn, the hearts of sequent generations,  
Where never manly races rose to nations,  
Marshall'd by knightly arm or kingly eye ;  
If, with new fortunes, a new earth you try,  
Then seek, oh, seek her in her purity !  
Drain not civilization's dregs and lees.  
In many an island clipt by tropic seas,  
Nature keeps yet a race by arts untamed,  
Who live half-innocent and unashamed.  
Ambition frets not them. In regions calm,  
'Mid prairies vast, or under banks of palm,  
They sing light wars and unafflicting loves,  
And vanish as the echo leaves the groves !  
Smooth space divides their cradles and their graves.  
What are they ? Apparitions—casual waves  
Heaved up in life's successive harmony !  
Brief smiles of nature followed by a sigh !  
Why not with such abide awhile and die ?

O, summoned are thy death to that repose  
The grave concedes to others ! by thy foes  
Franchised with that which friendship never gave—  
A heart as free from tremors as the grave !  
Last of a race whose helm and lance were known  
In furthest lands—now exiled from thine own—

Give thanks ! How many a sight is spared to thee,  
 Which we, thy sires in suffering, saw and see !  
 Thou hast beheld thy country, by the shocks  
 Of three long winters, driven upon the rocks  
 High and more high. Thou shalt not, day by day,  
 See her dismembered planks, the wrecker's prey,  
 Abused without remorse to uses base :  
 Thou hast beheld the home of all thy race,  
 Their lawns, their walks, and every grove and  
                   stream—

Their very tombs—pass from thee like a dream,  
 And leave thee bare. But thou shalt not behold  
 Thy woods devastated, nor gathering mould  
 Subdue the arms high hung, and blight the bloom  
 Of pomps heraldic, redd'ning scroll and tomb ;  
 Nor the starred azure touched by mists cold-lipped,  
 Till choir and aisle are black as vault and crypt,  
 Nor from the blazoned missal wane and faint  
 The golden age of martyr, maid, and saint,  
 Umbria's high pathos, and the Tuscan might,  
 And all thy wondering childhood's world of light.  
 Thou shalt not see that Cross thou loved'st so well  
 From minster towers rock-built, and hermit's cell  
 Swept by the self-same blast that sent the hind  
 Shivering to caves, and struck a kingdom blind !  
 All that was thine, while seas between thee roll  
 And them, in some still cloister of thy soul  
 Shall live, as, in a mother's heart inisled,  
 Lives on the painless memory of a child  
 Buried a babe. One image all shall make  
 Still as the gleam of sunset-lighted lake

Kenned from a tower o'er leagues of wood and lawn ;  
Or as perchance our planet looks, withdrawn  
From some pure spirit that leaves her—to his sight  
Lessening, not lost—a disk of narrowing light  
Sole-hung in regions of pure space afar—  
Of old the world he lived in, now a star !

But the wind swells yon sails. Why waste we breath ?  
My Lord, for thy soul's sake, and a good death,  
Forget the things a Gael's unmannered pen  
For thee records not, but for later men.  
Since hope is gone, let peace be thine instead.  
The snows which heap too soon that Norman head,  
Should calm it ; and a heart that bleeds for aye  
Has less to lose, and less to feel, each day.  
Seek not thy joys when on the desolate shore  
The raked rocks thunder, and the caverns roar,  
And the woods moan, while shoots the setting sun  
Discords of angry lights o'er billows dun.  
Make white thy thoughts as is a Vestal's sleep—  
Bloodless : prolong, beside the murmuring deep,  
Thy matutinal slumbers, till the bird  
That tuned, not broke them, is no longer heard.  
The flowers the children of the Stranger bring  
Indulgent take : permit thy latest Spring  
To lure from thee all bitterness and wrath :  
Into Death's bosom, genial as a bath,  
Sink back absolved. Justice to God belongs :  
Soul latest-stricken, leave with Him thy wrongs !

Justice, o'er angels and o'er men supreme,  
Still in mid heaven sustains her balanced beam,



With whose vast scales, whether they sink or rise,  
 The poles of earth are forced to sympathize.  
 Unseen she rules, wrapped round in cloud and awe ;  
 Her silence is the seal of mortal law ;  
 Her voice the harmony of every sphere :  
 Most distant is she ever, yet most near ;  
 Most strong when least regarded. From her eyes  
 That light goes forth which cheers the brave and  
                   wise ;

And in the arm that lifts aloft her sword,  
 Whatever might abides on earth is stored.  
 Fret not thyself. Watch thou (and wait) her hand !  
 The thunder-drops fall fast. In every land  
 Humanity breathes quick, and coming storm  
 Looks through man's soul with flashes swift and  
                   warm :

The fiery trial and the shaken sieve  
 Shall prove the nations. What can live shall live.  
 Falsehood shall die ; and falsehoods widest-based  
 Shall lie the lowest, though they fall the last.

Down from the mountain of their greatness hurled,  
 What witness bear the Nations to the World ?  
 Down rolled, like rocks along the Alpine stairs,  
 What warning voice is theirs, and ever theirs ?  
 Their ears the Nations unsubverted close,  
 For who would hear the voice whose words are  
                   Woes ?

Woe to ancestral greatness, if the dower  
 Of knightly worth confirm no more its power.  
 Woe to commercial strength, if sensual greed  
 Heap up like waves its insolent gold, nor heed



What solid good rewards the poor man's toil.  
Woe to the Monarch, if the unholy oil  
Of smooth-tongued flattery be his balm and chrism.  
Woe to the State cleft through by social schism.  
Woe to Religion, when the birds obscene  
Of Heresy from porch to altar-screen  
Range free ; while from the temple-eaves look down  
Doubt's shadowy brood, ill-masked in cowl or gown.  
Woe to the Rulers by the People ruled—  
A People drowned in sense, and pride-befooled,  
Trampling where sages once, and martyrs, trod.  
Ye nations meet your doom, or serve at last your  
God !

## IRELAND. 1851.

O THOU ! afflicted and beloved, O Thou !  
Who on thy wasted hands and bleeding brow—  
Dread miracle of Love—from reign to reign,  
Freshenest thy stigmata of sacred Pain :  
Lamp of the North when half the world was night ;  
Now England's darkness 'mid her noon of light ;  
History's sad wonder, whom all lands save one  
Gaze on through tears, and name with gentler tone :  
O Tree of God ! that burnest unconsumed ;  
O Life in Death ! for centuries entombed ;  
That art uprisen, and higher far shalt rise,  
Drawn up by strong attraction to the skies :  
Thyself most weak, yet strengthened from above :  
Smitten of God, yet not in hate, but love :—

Thy love make perfect, and from love's pure hate  
The earthlier scum and airier froth rebate !  
Be strong ; be true ! Thy palms not yet are won :  
Thine ampler mission is but now begun.  
Hope not for any crown save that thou wearest—  
The crown of thorns. Preach thou that Cross thou  
bearest !

Go forth ! each coast shall glow beneath thy tread !  
What radiance bursts from heaven upon thy head ?  
What fiery pillar is before thee borne ?  
Thy loved and lost ! They lead thee to thy morn !  
They pave thy paths with light ! Beheld by man,  
Thou walkest a shade, not shape, beneath a ban.  
Walk on—work on—love on ; and, suffering, cry,  
“ Give me more suffering, Lord, or else I die.”

*THE SISTERS; OR, WEAL IN WOE.*

AN IRISH TALE.

DEDICATED TO STEPHEN SPRING RICE.

FROM nine to twelve my guest was eloquent  
In anger, mixed with sorrow, at the things  
He saw around us—lands half marsh, half weeds,  
Gates from the gate-posts miserably divorced,  
Hovels ill-thatch'd, wild fences, fissured roads—  
“ Your people never for the future plan ;  
They live but for the moment.” Thus he spake,  
A youth just entering on his broad domains,

A senator in prorogation time  
Travelling for knowledge, Oxford's accurate scholar,  
A perfect rider, clean in all his ways,  
But by traditions narrow'd. As the moon  
Turns but one side to earth, so show'd that world  
Whereon he gazed, for stubborn was his will,  
And Ireland he had never loved. "You err,"  
I answer'd, taking in good part his wrath,  
"Our peasant too has prescience ; far he sees ;  
Earth is his foreground only, rough or smooth ;  
In him from seriousness the lightness comes :  
Too serious is he to make sacrifice  
For fleeting good ; the battles of this world  
He with the left hand fights, and half in sport ;  
He has his moment—and eternity."  
"Ay, ay," exclaim'd my guest, "your Church, she  
does it !

Your feasts and fasts and wakes and social rites,  
With 'Sir,' and 'Ma'am,' and usages of Court :—  
I've seen a hundred men leave plough and spade  
To take a three weeks' infant to its grave,  
A cripple pay two shillings for a cart  
To bear him to the Holy Well—Sick Land !  
Look up ! the proof is round you written large !  
Your Faith is in the balance wanting found :  
Your shipless seas confess it ; bridgeless streams ;  
Your wasted wealth of ore, and moor, and bay !  
Beneath the Upas shade of Faith depraved  
All things lie dead — wealth, comfort, freedom,  
power—  
All that great Nations boast !" "Such things," I an-  
swer'd,

The Gentiles seek ; and you new texts have found :  
'*Ecclesiæ stantis vel cadentis,*' friend ;—  
'Blessed the rich : blessed whom all men praise :'  
New Scriptures, these ; the Irish keep the old !  
Say, are there not diversities of gifts ?  
Are there not virtues—Industry is one—  
Which reap on earth, whilst others sow for heaven ?  
Faith, hope, and love, and purity, and patience,  
Humility, and self-forgetfulness,  
These too are virtues ; yet they rear not States.  
What then ? Of many Nations earth is made :  
Each hath its function ; each its part for others :  
If all were hand, where then were ear or eye ?  
If all were foot, where head ? You rail, my friend,  
Not at my country only but your own.  
The land that gave us birth our service claims,  
The suffering land our love. Yet England, too,  
They love, and they the most, who flatter not.  
A thousand years of nobleness she lived  
Whereof you rob her ! In this isle are men  
By ancient lineage hers. Such men might say,  
'My England was entomb'd ere yours had birth'—  
Dates she from Arkwright only ? Rose the Nation  
With Alfred, or those Tudor Kings who built  
The Golden Gate of England's modern time,  
But built it upon liberties annull'd,  
Old glories quench'd, the old nobles dead or quell'd—  
Aye, wrecks more sad ?" His host, I could not use  
Words rough as his albeit to shield a land  
For every shaft a targe ; so changed the theme  
To her he knew—thence loved.

He loved his country ;

An older man than he for things less great  
Had loved her less. Yet who could gaze, unmoved,  
From Windsor's terraced heights o'er those broad  
meads

Lit by the pomp of silver-winding Thames  
Dropping past templed grove, and hall, and farm,  
Toward the great City? Who, unthrill'd, could mark  
Her Minsters, towering far away, with heads  
That stay the sunset of old times; or them,  
Oxford and Cambridge, England's anchors twain,  
That to her moorings hold her? Fresh from these  
Who, who could tread, O Wye, thy watery vale  
Where Tintern reigns in ruin; who could rest  
Where Bolton finds in Wharf a warbling choir,  
Or where the sea-wind fans thy brow discrown'd,  
Furness, nor love and wonder? Who, untouch'd,  
When evening creeps from Scawfell toward Black  
Combe,

Could wander by thy darkly gleaming lakes  
Embay'd mid sylvan garniture and isles  
From saint or anchoret named, within the embrace  
Of rural mountains green, or sound, scent, touch,  
Of kine-besprinkled, soft, partition'd vales,  
Almost domestic? Shadow-haunted land!  
By Southey's lake Saint Herbert holds his own!  
The knightly armor now by Yew-dale's crag  
Rings loud no longer: Grasmere's reddening glass  
Reflects no more the on-rushing clan; yet still  
Thy Saxon kings, and ever-virgin Queens  
Possess thee with a quiet pathos; still,  
Like tarnish'd path forlorn of moon that sets  
Over wide-water'd moor and marsh, thy Past

A spiritual sceptre, though deposed, extends  
From sea to sea—from century-worn St. Bees  
To Cuthbert's tomb under those eastern towers  
On Durham's bowery steep !

He loved his country :  
That love I honor'd. Great and strong he call'd her ;  
But well I knew that had her greatness waned,  
His love had wax'd.

As thus we talk'd the sun  
Launch'd through the hurrying clouds a rainy beam  
That smote the hills. My guest exclaim'd, "Come  
forth—

We waste the day ! Yon ridge my fancy takes ;  
Climb we its crest !" The wolf-hound at our feet,  
Our drift divining, bounded sudden on us  
In rapture of prospective gratitude.

We pass'd the offending gate ; a plank for bridge,  
We pass'd the offending stream which dash'd its  
spray

Contemptuous on us, proud of liberty.  
I laugh'd.—"Our passionate Ireland is the stream ;  
Seven hundred years at will it mocks or chides ;  
You have not made it turn your English mill !"   
We scaled the hills ; we push'd through miles of trees,  
Which, sire and son, had held their own since first  
The tall elk trod their ways. Lightning and storm  
Had left large wrecks :—election wars, not less,  
Or hospitalities as fierce, when home  
A thousand chiefless clansmen dragg'd the bride,  
Or danced around a cradle,—ah, brave hearts !  
Loyal where cause for loyalty was scant !

Vast were those woods and fair ; rock, oak, and yew,  
Grey, green, and black, in varying measures striking  
That three-string'd lyre which charms not ear but eye.  
Long climbing, from the woodland we emerged  
And paced a rocky neck of pale green pasture,  
The limit of two counties. Full in face  
Rush'd, ocean-scented, the harmonic wind :  
Round us the sheep-bells chimed ; a shower late past  
With jewelry had hung the blackberry bush,  
And gorse-brake half in gold. On either side  
Thin-skinn'd, ascetic, slippery, the descent  
Down slanted toward the creeping mists. Our goal  
We reach'd at last—a broad and rocky mass  
Forth leaning, lordly, unto lands remote,  
The lion's head of all those feeble hills  
That cowering slunk behind it. Far around  
Low down, subjected, stretch'd the sea-like waste  
Shade-swept, unbounded, like infinity.  
An hour before his time the sun had dropp'd  
Behind a mountain-wall of barrier cloud  
Wide as the world: but five great beams converged  
Toward the invisible seat of his eclipse ;  
And over many a river, bay, and mere  
Lay the dull red of ante-dated eve.

That summit was a churchyard. Cross-engraven  
Throng'd the close tomb-stones. Each one prayed  
for peace ;  
And some were raised by men whose heads were  
white  
Ere selfless toil had won the hoarded coins  
That honor'd thus a parent. In the midst



A tomb-like chapel, thirty feet by ten,  
Stood monumental, with stone roof and walls  
The wrestling centuries slid from. Nigh we sat,  
While, by the polish'd angle-split, the wind  
Hiss'd like a forkèd serpent. Silent long  
My friend remain'd; his sallies all had ceased,  
A man of tender nerve though stubborn thought.  
The scene weigh'd on him like a Prophet's scroll  
Troubling some unjust City. Round and round  
He scann'd the desolate region, and at last  
Pray'd me the hieroglyphic to expound.  
"Yon tower which blurs the lonely lake far off,  
What is it?" And I answer'd, "Know you not?  
He built it, he that Norman horsed and mail'd,  
Who, strong in Henry's might and Adrian's bull,  
Rent from the Gaelic monarch half his realm;—  
The rest came later, dowry of the bride."

Once more he mused; then, westward pointing,  
spake:—

"Yon lovely hills, yet low, with Phidian line,  
That melt into the horizon:—on their curve  
A ruined castle stands; the sky glares through it,  
Red, like a conflagration?" I replied:  
"Four hundred years the Norman held his own:  
He spake the People's language; they in turn  
His war-cry had resounded far and wide;  
Their history he had grown, impersonate.  
The Land rejoiced in him, and of his greatness  
Uplifted, glorying, on a neck high held  
The beautiful burden, as the wild stag lifts  
O'er rocky Torc his antlers! Would you more?"



The Desmond was unloved beside the Thames ;  
The right of the great Palatine was trampled ;  
His Faith by law proscribed. O'er tombs defaced,  
In old Askeaton's Abbey, of his sires  
He vow'd unwilling war. Long years the realm  
Reel'd like a drunken man. Behold the end !  
Yon wreck speaks all !"

Thus question after question  
Dragg'd, maim'd and mangled, dragg'd reluctant  
forth  
Time's dread confession ! Crime replied to crime :  
Whom Tudor planted Cromwell rooted out ;  
For Charles they fought ;—to fight for Kings, their  
spoilers,  
The rebel named rebellion ! William next !  
Once more the Nobles were down hurl'd ; once more  
Nobility as in commission placed  
By God among the lowly. Loyalty  
To native Princes, or to Norman chiefs,  
Their lawless conquerors, or to British Kings,  
Or her the Mother Church that ne'er betray'd,  
Had met the same reward. The legend spake  
Words few but plain, grim rubric traced in blood ;  
While, like a Fury fleeting through the air,  
History from all the octaves of her lyre  
Struck but one note ! What rifted tower and keep  
Witness'd of tyrannous and relentless wars,  
That shipless gulfs, that bridgeless streams and moors,  
Black as if lightning-scarr'd, or curst of God,  
Proclaim'd of laws blacker than brand or blight—  
Those Penal Laws. The tale was none of mine ;

Stone rail'd at stone ; grey ruins dumbly frown'd  
Defiance, and the ruin-handled blast  
Scatter'd the fragments of Cassandra's curse  
From the far mountains to the tombs close by,  
Which mutter'd treason.

That sad scene to me  
Had lost by use its pathos as the scent  
Which thrills us, while we pass the garden, palls  
On one within it tarrying. To my friend  
It spake its natural language : and as he  
Who, hard through habit, reads with voice unmoved  
A ballad that once touch'd him, if perchance  
Some listener weeps, partakes that listener's trouble,  
Even so the stranger's sorrow struck on mine,  
And I believed the things which I beheld,  
There sitting silent. When at last he spake,  
The spirit of the man in part was changed ;  
The things but heard of he had seen : the truths  
Coldly conceded now he realized :  
Justice at last, with terrible recoil,  
Leap'd up full-arm'd, a strong man after sleep,  
And dash'd itself against the wrong ! I answer'd :  
“ Once more you speak the words you spake this  
morn,—  
‘ Look up, the proof is round you, written large : ’  
But in an alter'd sense.”

I spake, and left him :  
Left him to seek a tomb which three long years  
Holds one I honor'd. Half-an-hour went by ;



*THE SISTERS.*

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Then he rejoin'd me. With a knitted brow,  
And clear vindictiveness of speech, like him  
Who, loving, hates the sin of whom he loves,  
He spake against the men who, having won  
By right or wrong the mastery of this isle  
(For in our annals he was versed, nor ran  
In custom's blinkers, save on modern roads),  
Could make of it, seven hundred years gone by,  
No more than this !—Then I :—" No country loved  
they :

Her least, the imperial realm !—'Tis late to mourn ;  
Let past be past." " The Past," he said, " is pre-  
sent ;

And o'er the Future stretches far a hand  
Shadowy and minatory." " Come what may,"  
I said, " no suffering can to us be new ;  
No shadow fail to dew some soul with grace.  
The history of a Soul holds in it more  
Than doth a Nation's ! In its every chance  
Eternity lies hid ; from every step  
Branch forth two paths piercing infinity.  
These things look noblest from their spiritual side :  
A statesman, on the secular side you see them,  
And doubt a future based on such a past.  
'Tis true, with wrong dies not the effect of wrong,  
Or sense thereof :—'tis true stern Power with time  
Changes its modes, not instinct : true it is  
That hollow peace is war that wears a mask :  
Yet let us quell to-day unquiet thoughts :  
She rests who lies in yonder tomb : sore pains  
She suffer'd : yet within her there was peace :  
In God's high Will she rests, and why not we ?"

Thus we conversed till twilight, thickening, crept,  
Compassionate, o'er a scene to which we said  
Twilight seem'd native, day a garish vest  
Worn by a slave. Returning, oft my friend  
Cast loose, in wrath, the arch-rebel Truth ; I answer'd :

“ She rests, and why not we ? O suffering land !  
Thee, too, God shields ; and only for this cause  
Can they that love thee sleep.” Her tale at last  
He sought with instance. 'Twas not marvellous,  
I told him : yet to calm his thoughts perturb'd,  
Thus, while the broad moon o'er the lonely moor  
Rose, blanching as she soar'd, till pools, at first  
With trembling light o'erlaid, gave back her face,  
And all the woodland waves as eve advanced  
Shone bright o'er sombre hollows, I recounted  
The fragments of a noteless Irish life,  
Not strange esteem'd among us. Such a theme  
I sought not. Ill it were to forge for friend  
A providence, or snare him though to Truth.  
Yet I was pleased he sought that tale. 'Twas sad  
But in its dusky glass (and this I hid not)  
Shadow'd a phantom image of my country,  
Vanquish'd yet victor, in her weal and woe.

---

The Father in the prime of manhood died ;  
The mother follow'd soon ; their children twain,  
Margaret Mac Carthy, and her sister Mary,  
The eldest scarcely ten years old, survived  
To spread cold hands upon a close-seal'd grave,  
And cry to those who answer'd not. The man

Who, in that narrow spot to them the world,  
Stood up and seem'd as God ;—that gentler one  
Who overhung like Heaven their earliest thought,  
And in the bosom of whose sleepless love  
Reborn they seem'd each morning—both were dead.  
In grief's bewilderment the orphans stood  
Like one by fraud betray'd : nor moon, nor sun,  
Nor trees, nor grass, nor herds, nor hills appear'd  
To them what they had been. In sadden'd eyes,  
Frighten'd yet dull, in voice subdued, and feet  
That moved as though they fear'd to wake the dead,  
Men saw that nowhere loneliness more lives  
Than in the breasts of children. Time went by ;  
The farm was lost ; and to her own small home  
Their father's mother led them. 'Twas not far ;  
They could behold the orchard they had loved ;  
Behind the hedge could hear the robin sing,  
And the bees murmur. Slowly, as the trance  
Of grief dissolved, the present lived once more ;  
The past became a dream !

I see them still !

Softly the beauty-making years on went,  
And each one as he pass'd our planet's verge  
Look'd back, and left a gift. A darker shade  
Dropp'd on the deepening hair ; a brighter gleam  
Forth flash'd from sea-blue eyes with darkness fringed.  
Like, each to each, their stature growing kept  
Unchanged gradation. To her grandmother  
A quick eye, and a serviceable hand  
Endear'd the elder most ; she kept the house ;  
Hers was the rosier cheek, the livelier mind,

The smile of readier cheer. In Mary lived  
A visionary and pathetic grace  
Through all her form diffused, from those small feet  
Up to that beauteous-shaped and netted head,  
Which from the slender shoulders and slight bust  
Rose like a queen's. Alone, not solitary,  
Full often half an autumn day she sat  
On the high grass-banks, foot with foot enclasped,  
Now twisting osiers, watching cloud-shades now,  
Or rushing vapors, through whose chasms there shone  
Far off an alien race of clouds like Alps  
O'er Courmayeur white-gleaming, and like them  
To stillness frozen. Well that orphan knew them,  
Those marvellous clouds that roof our Irish wastes ;  
Spring's lightsome veil outblown, sad Autumn's bier,  
And Winter's pillar of electric light  
Slanted from heaven. A spirit-world, so seem'd it,  
In them was imaged forth to her.

With us

The childish heart betroths itself full oft  
In vehement friendship. Mary's was of these ;  
And thus her fancy found that counterweight  
Which kept her feet on earth. With her there walk'd  
Two years a little maiden of the place,  
Her comrade, as men call'd her. Eve by eve  
Homeward from school we saw them as they pass'd,  
One arm of each about the other's neck,  
Above both heads a single cloak. She died,  
To Mary leaving what she valued most,  
A rosary strung with beads from Olivet.  
Daily did Mary count those beads :—from each  
The picture of some Christian Truth ascending,

Till all the radiant Mysteries shone on high  
Like constellations, and man's gloomy life  
For her to music roll'd on poles of love  
Through realms of glory. Hope makes Love im-  
mortal !

That friend she ne'er forgot. In later years  
Working with other maidens equal-aged,  
(A lady of the land instructed them,)  
In circle on the grass, not them she saw,  
Heard not the song they sang : alone she sat,  
And heard 'mid sighing pines and murmuring streams  
The voice of the departed.

Smoothly flow'd  
Till Margaret had attain'd her eighteenth year  
The tenor of their lives ; and they became,  
Those sisters twain, a name in all the vale  
For beauty, kindness, truth, for modest grace,  
And all that makes that fairest flower of all  
Earth bears, heaven fosters—peasant nobleness :—  
For industry the elder. Mary fail'd  
In this, a dreamer ; indolence her fault,  
And self-indulgence, not that coarser sort  
Which seeks delight, but that which shuns annoy.  
And yet she did her best. The dull red morn  
Shone, beamless, through the wintry hedge while pass'd  
That pair with panniers, or, on whitest brows,  
The balanced milk-pails. Margaret ruled serene,  
A wire-fenced empire smiling through soft glooms,  
The pure, health-breathing dairy. Softer hand  
Than Mary's ne'er let loose the wool ; no eye  
Finer pursued the on-flowing line : her wheel



Murmur'd complacent joy like kitten pleased.  
With us such days abide not.

Sudden fell  
Famine, the Terror never absent long,  
Upon our land. It shrank—the daily dole ;  
The oatmeal trickled from a tighter grasp ;  
Hunger grew wild through panic ; infant cries  
Madden'd at times the gentle into wrong :  
Death's gentleness more oft for death made way ;  
And like a lamb that openeth not its mouth  
The sacrificial People, fillet-bound,  
Stood up to die. Amid inviolate herds  
Thousands the sacraments of death received,  
Then waited God's decree. These things are known :  
Strangers have witness'd to them ; strangers writ  
The epitaph again and yet again.  
The nettles and the weeds by the way-side  
Men ate : from sharpening features and sunk eyes  
Hunger glared forth, a wolf more lean each hour ;  
Children seem'd pigmies shrivell'd to sudden age ;  
And the deserted babe too weak to wail  
But shook its hands, pitying or curious, raised  
The rag across him thrown. In England alms  
From many a private hearth were largely sent,  
As oft-times they have been. 'Twas vain. The land  
Wept while her sons sank back into her graves  
Like drowners 'mid still seas. Who could escaped :  
And on a ghost-throng'd deck, amid such cries  
As from the battle-field ascend at night  
When stumbling widows grope o'er heaps of slain,  
Amid such cries stood Mary, when the ship  
Its cable slipp'd and, on the populous quays



Grating, without a wind, on the slow tide,  
Dropp'd downward to the main.

For western shores  
Those emigrants were bound. At Liverpool,  
Fann'd by the ocean breeze, the smouldering fire  
Of fever burst into a sudden flame ;  
The stricken there were left ;—among them Mary.  
How long she knew not in an hospital  
She lay, a Babel of confused distress  
Dinn'd with delirious strife. But o'er her brow  
God shook the dew of dreams wherein she trod  
The shadow'd wood-walks of old days once more,  
And dabbled in old streams. Ere long, still weak,  
Abroad she roam'd, a basket on her arm,  
With violets heap'd. The watchman of the city  
Laid his strong hand upon her drooping head  
Banning the impostor. 'Twas her rags, she thought,  
Incensed him, and in meekness moved she on.  
When one with lubrique smile toy'd with her flowers,  
And spake of violet eyes and easier life,  
She understood not, but misliked, and pass'd.  
In Liverpool an aged priest she found,  
A kinsman of her mother's. Much to her  
Of emigrants he spake, and of their trials,  
Old ties annull'd, and 'mid temptations strange  
Lacking full oft the Bread of Life. She wept ;  
Before the tabernacle's lamp she pray'd  
Freshly-absolved and heavenliest, with a prayer  
That shower'd God's blessing o'er the wanderers down ;  
But dead was her desire to cross the main.  
Her strength restored, beyond the city-bound  
With others of her nation she abode,

Amid the gardens laboring. A rough clan  
Those outcasts seem'd ; not like their race at home :  
Nor chapel theirs, nor school. Their strength was  
prized ;

Themselves were so esteem'd as that sad tribe  
Beside the Babylonian streams that wept,  
By those that loved not Sion.

Weeks grew months ;  
And, with the strength to suffer, sorrow came.  
Hard by their nomad camp a youth there lived  
Of wealthier sort, who look'd upon this maid :  
Her country was his own : he loved it not ;  
Had rooted quickly in the stranger's land ;  
And versatile, cordial, specious, seeming-frank,  
Contracting for himself a separate peace,  
Had prosper'd, but had prosper'd in such sort  
As they that starve within. Her confidence  
He gain'd. To love unworthy, still he loved her :  
Loved with the love of an unloving heart—  
That love which either is in shallows lost,  
Or in its black depth breeds the poison weed.  
She knew him not ; how could she ? He himself  
Knew scanty. Near her what was best within him  
Her golden smile sunn'd forth ; but, dark and cold,  
Like a benighted hemisphere abode  
A moiety of his being which she saw not.  
His was a superficial nature, vain,  
And hard, to good impressions sensitive,  
And most admiring virtues least his own ;  
A mirror that took in a seeming world,  
And yet remain'd blank surface. He was crafty,  
Follow'd the plough with diplomatic heart ;

His acts were still like the knight's move at chess,  
Each a surprise ; not less, to nature's self  
Who heard him still referr'd them. "What !" men said,  
"Marry the portionless !" Strange are fortune's freaks !  
The wedding-day was fix'd, the ring brought home,  
When from a distant uncle tidings came :  
His latest son was dead. "Take thou my farm,  
And share my house"—So spake the stern old man—  
"And wed the wife whom I for thee have found."  
He show'd the maid that letter. Slowly the weeds  
Made way adown the thick and stifled stream,  
And others follow'd ; slowly sailed the cloud  
Through the dull sky, and others followed slowly :  
At last he spake. Low were his words and thin,  
Many, but scarcely heard. He asked—her counsel !  
Her cheek one moment burn'd. Death-cold, once more  
A little while she sat ; then rose and said :—  
"You would be free ; I free you ; go in peace."  
'Twas the good angel in his heart that loved her ;  
'Twas not the man himself ! He wept, but went.  
The woman of the house that night was sure  
The girl had loved him not. She thought not so  
When, four months past, she mark'd her mouth, aside,  
Tremble, his name but utter'd.

Sharp the wrong !

Yet they on Life's bewildered book would force  
A partial gloss it bears not who assume  
The injured wholly free from blame. The world  
Is not a board in squares of black and white,  
Or else the judgment-executing tongue  
Would lack probation. Wrong'd men are not angels ;  
Wrong's chiefest sin is this—it genders wrong ;

So stands the offender in his own esteem  
Exculpate ; while the feebly-judging starve  
The just cause, babbling " mutual was the offence !"  
—The man was weak ; not wholly vile. 'Twas well,  
Doubtless, to free him ; yet in after years,  
When early blight had struck his radiant head,  
The girl bewail'd the pride that left thus tempted  
The man she loved ; arraign'd the wrath that left him  
Almost without farewell. His letter too,  
Unopen'd she return'd. 'Twas strange ! so sweet—  
Not less there lived within her, down, far down,  
A fire-spring seldom waken'd ! When a child  
At times, by some strange jealousy disturb'd  
From her still dream she flash'd in passion quell'd  
Ere from her staid sister's large blue eyes  
The astonishment had pass'd. Such moods remain'd  
Though rare—that wrath of tender hearts, which scorns  
Revenge, which scarcely utters its complaint,  
And yet forgives but slowly.

In those days

Within the maiden's bosom there arose  
Sea-longings, and desire to sail away  
She knew not whither ; and her arms she spread,  
Weeping, to winds and waves, and shores unknown,  
Lighted by other skies ; and inly thus  
She reason'd, self-deceived. " What keeps thee here ?  
" 'Twas for a farther bourne thou bad'st farewell  
" To those at home, and here thou art as one  
" That hangs between two callings." In her heart  
Tempests low-toned to ocean-tempests yearn'd,  
And ever when she mark'd the shipmast forest  
That on the smoky river swayed far off,

Her wish became a craving. Soon once more  
Alone 'mid hundreds on a rain-wash'd deck  
She stood, and saw the billows heave around,  
And all the passions of that headlong world.  
Dark-visaged ocean frown'd with hoary brows  
Against dark skies ; huge, lumbering water-weights  
Went shouldering through the abysses : streaming  
clouds

Ran on the lower levels of the wind ;  
And in the universe of things she seem'd  
An atom random blown. Full many a morn  
Rose red through mists, like babe that weeps to rise ;  
Full many an evening died from wave to wave ;—  
Then gradual peace possess'd her. Love may wound,  
But 'tis self-love that wound exasperates ;  
A noble nature casts out bitterness,  
And o'er the scar, like pine-tree incorrupt,  
Weeps healing gums. Heart-whole she gazed at last,  
On the great city chiefest of that realm  
Which wears the Future's glory. Landed, soon  
Back to old duties with a mightier zest  
Her heart, its weakening sadness pass'd, return'd ;  
Kindness made service easier ; and the tasks  
At first distasteful, smiled on her ere long.  
There she was loved once more ; there all went well ;  
And there in peace she might have lived and died ;  
Yet in that region she abode not long.  
In part a wayward instinct drave her forth ;  
In part a will that from the accomplish'd end  
Unstable swerved ; in part a hope forlorn.  
A site she sought, their sojourn who had left  
Long since her village. There old names, old voices,

Faces unknown, yet recognized, throng'd round her  
In unconsummate union, (hearts still like,  
Yet all beside so different,) not like Souls  
Re-met in heaven—more like those Shades antique  
That, 'mid the empurpled fields, of other airs  
Mindful, in silence trod the lordly land,  
Or flock'd around the latest guest of Death  
With question sad of home. Imperfect ties  
Rub severance into soreness. Mary pass'd,  
Thus urged, ere long to lonelier climes. She track'd  
Companion'd sometimes, sometimes without friend,  
The boundless prairie, sail'd the sea-like lake,  
Descended the broad river as it rush'd  
Through immemorial forests: lastly stood  
Sole, 'mid that city by the southern sea.

There sickness fell upon her: there her hand  
Dropt, heavier daily, on her task half done;  
Her feet wore chains unseen. The end, she thought,  
Was coming. Ofttimes, in her happier days,  
She wish'd to die and be with God: yet now,  
Wearied by many griefs, to life she clung,  
Upbraiding things foregone and inly sighing  
"None loves to die." Sorrow, earth-born, in some  
Breeds first the Earth-infection; in them works,  
Like those pomegranate seeds that barr'd from light  
For aye sad Ceres' child! Alas! how many,  
The ill-honor'd ecstasies of youth surceased,  
Exchange its clear spring for the mire! Hope sick,  
How oft Faith dies! How few are they in whom  
Virgin but yields to Vestal; casual pureness  
Merged in essential; childhood's matin dew  
Fix'd, ere exhaled, in the Soul's adamant!



Mary with these had part; to her help came—  
That help the proud despise. One eve it chanced  
Upon the vast and dusking quays she stood  
Alone and weeping. She that morn had sent  
Her latest hoardings to her grandmother,  
And half was sorry she had naught retain'd:  
The warm rain wet her hair: she heard within  
The silver ringing of its drops commingling  
With that still mere beside her childhood's home,  
And with the tawny sedge that girt it round,  
And with its winter dogwood far away  
Reddening the faint, still gleam. As thus she stood  
Upon her shoulder sank a hand. She turn'd:  
It was a noble lady, clothed in black,  
And veil'd. That veil thrown back, she recognized  
At once the luminous stillness and the calm  
Ethereal which the sacred cloister breeds.  
A voice as pure and sweet as if from heaven  
Toned, as friend speaks to friend, address'd her  
thus:

“You lack a home: our convent is hard by.”

The lady, Spanish half, and Irish half,  
No answer sought; but with compulsion soft  
Drew her, magnetic, as the tree hard by  
Draws the poor creeper on the ground diffused,  
And lifts it into light. The child's cold hand  
Lurk'd soon in hers: and in that home which seem'd  
An isle of heaven the meek lay-sister lived  
(Ere long by healthier airs to strength restored)  
A rapturous life of Christian freedom, mask'd  
In what but servitude had been to one  
Lacking vocation true. The Life Divine,

“Hidden with God,” is hidden from the world,  
Lest Virtue should be dimm’d by Virtue’s praise.  
Heroic Virtue least by men is prized :  
The hero in the saint the crowd can honor,  
The saint at best forgive. To this world’s ken  
Convents, of sanctity chief citadels,  
(Though sanctity in every place is found,)  
The snowy banners and bright oriflams  
Of that resplendent realm by Counsels ruled,  
Not Precept only, spread in vain, despised,  
Or for their earthly good alone revered,  
Not for their claims celestial. Different far  
The lesson Mary learn’d. The poor were fed,  
The orphan nursed ; around the sick man’s couch  
Gentle as light hover’d the healing hand ;  
And beautiful seem’d, on mountain-tops of truth,  
The foot that brought good tidings ! Times of trial  
Were changed to Sabbaths ; and the rude, rough girl,  
Waiting another service, found a home  
Where that which years had marr’d return’d once more  
Like infant flesh clothing the leprous limb.  
Yet these things Mary found were blossoms only :  
The tree’s deep root was secret. From the Vow  
Which bound the Will’s infinitude to God,  
Upwell’d that peaceful strength whose fount was God :  
From Him behind His sacramental veil  
In holy passion for long hours adored,  
Came that great Love which made the bonds of earth  
Needless, thence irksome. Wondering, there she  
learn’d  
The creature was not for the creature made,  
But for the sole Creator ; that His kingdom,



Glorious hereafter, lies around us here,  
Its visible splendor painfully suppressing,  
And waiting its transfiguration. Was it strange,  
If while those Brides of Christ around her moved  
Her heart sang hymns to God? Much had she suffer'd :

Much of her suffering gladly there she learn'd  
Came of her fault ; and much had kindest ends  
Not yet in her fulfill'd. A light o'ershine her  
Which slays Illusion, that white snake which slimes  
The labyrinth of self-love's more tender ways—  
Virtue's most specious mimic. She was loosed :  
The actual by the seeming thralldom slain ;  
Her life was from within and from above ;  
And as, when Winter dies, and Spring new-born  
Her whisper breathes o'er earth, the earlier flowers  
(Unlike the wine-dark growths of Autumn, dipped  
In the year's sunset) rise in lightest hues,  
An astral gleam, white, green, or delicate yellow,  
More light than color, so the maiden's thoughts  
Flash'd with a radiance that permitted scarce  
Human affections tragic. Oft, she told me,  
As faithless to old friends she blamed herself :—  
One hand touched Calvary, one the Eternal Gates ;  
The present nothing seem'd. The years pass'd on :  
The honeymoon of this heart-bridal waned ;  
But nothing of its spousal truth was lost,  
Nor of its serious joy. If failures came—  
And much she marvell'd at her slow advance,  
And for the first time (pierced by that stern grace  
Wherein no sin looks trivial) fear'd ;—what then?  
Failures that deepen'd humbleness but sank

Foundations deeper for a loftier pile  
Of solid virtue : transports homeward summon'd  
For more disinterested love made way,  
More perfect made Obedience.

If a Soul,  
Half-way to heaven, death past, once more to earth  
Were sent, it could but feel as Mary felt  
When on the convent grates a letter smote  
Loud, harsh, with summons from the outward world.  
Her sister, such its tidings, was a wife,  
(That matron whom you praised :—ay, comely is she,  
And good ; laborious, kindly, faithful, true ;  
Yet Time has done Time's work, her spiritual beauty  
Transposing gently to a lower key ;)  
Her grandmother bereft, and weak through age,  
Needed her tendance sorely. Would she come ?  
Alas ! what could she ? Duty stretched from far  
An iron hand that stay'd her mounting steps ;  
The little novices wept loud, " Abide !"  
Long on her neck the saintly sisterhood  
Hung ere they bless'd her : then she turn'd and went.

And so once more she trod this rocky vale,  
And scarcely older look'd at twenty-six  
Than at sixteen. Before so gentle, now  
A humbler gentleness was o'er her thrown ;  
Nor ruffled was she ever as of yore  
With gusts of flying spleen : nor fear'd she now  
Hindrance unlovely, or the word that jar'd.  
The sadness hers at first dispers'd ere long,  
And such strange sweetness came to her, men said  
A mad dog would not bite her. Lowliest toils

Were by her hand ennobled: Labor's staff  
Beneath it burst in blossom. In the garden,  
'Mid earliest birds, and singing like a bird,  
She moved, her grandmother asleep. She mix'd  
The reverence due to years with tenderness  
The infant's claim. 'Twas hers the crutch to bring,  
Nor mark the lameness; hers with question apt  
To prompt, not task, the memory. Tales twice-told  
Wearied not her, nor orders each with each  
At odds, nor causeless blame. Wiles she had many  
To anticipate harsh moods, lest one rash word  
Might draw a cloud 'twixt helpless eld and heaven,  
Blotting the Eternal Vision felt, not seen,  
By hearts in grace. With works of gay caprice,  
Needless—yet prized—she made the spectre Want  
Seem farther off. Thus love in narrow space  
Built a great world. The grandmother prefer'd  
To her, that dreamful girl of old, the woman  
Who from the mystic precinct first had learn'd  
Humanity, yet seem'd a human creature  
By some angelic guest o'er-ruled. At heart  
Ever a nun, she minister'd with looks  
That heal'd the sick. The newly-widow'd door  
Its gloom remitted when she pass'd; stern foes  
Down trod their legend of old wrongs. To her  
Sacred were those that grieved;—those tearless  
yet  
Sacred scarce less because they smiled, nor knew  
The ambush'd fate before them. When a child,  
Grey-hair'd companionship or solitude  
Had pleased her more than childish ways; but now  
All the long eves of summer in the porch

The children of her sister and the neighbors,  
A spotless flock, sat round her. From her smiles  
The sluggish mind caught light, the timid heart  
Courage and strength. Unconscious thus, each day  
Her soft and blithesome feet one letter traced  
In God's great Book above. So pass'd her life ;—  
Sorrow had o'er it hung a gentle cloud ;  
But, like an autumn-mocking day in Spring,  
Dewy and dim, yet ending in pure gold,  
The sweets were sweeter for the rain, the growth  
Stronger for shadow.

You have seen her tomb !

Upon the young and beautiful it closed :  
Her grandmother yet lingers ! What is Time ?  
Shut out the sun, and all the summer long  
The fruit-tree stands as barren as the rock ;  
May's offering March can bring us. Of the twain  
The younger doubtless in the eyes of God  
Had inly lived the longest. She had learn'd  
From action much, from suffering more, far more,  
For stern Experience is a sword whose point  
Makes way for Truth. Her trials, great and little,  
And trials ever keep proportion just  
With high vocations, and the spirit's growth,  
Had done their work till all her inner being  
Freed from asperities, in the light of God  
Shone like the feet of some old crucifix  
Kiss'd into smoothness. Here I fain would end,  
Leaving her harbor'd ; but her stern, kind fates  
Not thus forewent her. Like her life her death,  
Not negative or neutral ; great in pains,  
In consolations greater. Many a week

Much ail'd her ; what the cause remain'd in doubt ;  
When certainty had come she trembled not.

Fix'd was her heart. Those pangs that shook her  
frame,

Like tempests roaring round a mountain church,  
Shook not that peace within her ! She was thank-  
ful ;

" More pain if such Thy Will, and patience more,  
This was her prayer ; or wiping from moist eyes  
The trembling tear, she whisper'd, " Give me, Lord,  
On earth Thy cleansing fire that I may see  
Sooner Thy Face, death past !"

Alleviations,

Many and great, God granted her. Once more  
Her sister was her sister ! Unlike fortunes  
Had placed at angles those two lives that once  
Lay side by side ; and love that could not die  
Had seem'd to sleep. It woke ; and, as from mist,  
Once more shone out their childhood ! Laugh'd and  
flash'd

Once more the garden-beds whose bright accost  
Had cheered them for their parents mourning. Tears  
Remember'd stay'd the course of later tears ;  
The prosperous from the unprosperous sister sought  
Heart-peace ; nor wealth nor care could part them  
more ;

And sometimes Margaret's children seem'd to her  
As children of another ! Greetings sweet  
Cheer'd her from distant regions. Once it chanced  
The nuns a relic sent her ne'er before  
Seen in our vales, a fragment of that Cross  
Whereon the world's Redeemer hung three hours :—

The neighbors entering knelt and wept, and smote  
Their breasts ; her hands she raised in prayer ; and  
straight

Such Love, such Reverence in her heart there rose  
Her anguish, like a fiend exorcised, fled ;  
And for an hour at peace she lay as one  
Imparadised. A solace too was hers  
Known but to babes. Her body, not her mind,  
Was rack'd ; the pang to come she little fear'd,  
Nor lengthen'd out morose the pang foregone :  
Once o'er, to sleep she sank in thankful prayer.

A week ere Mary died all suffering left her ;  
And from the realms of glory beams, as though  
Further restraint they brook'd not, fell on her  
Yet militant below, as there she lay  
In monumental whiteness, spirit-lit.  
The anthems of her convent charm'd once more  
Her dreams ; and scents from woods where she had  
sat

In tears. Then spake she of her wandering days ;—  
Herself she scarcely seem'd to see in them ;  
Plainly thus much I saw : When all went well,  
Danger stood nigh ; but soon as sorrow came,  
Within that darkness nearer by her side  
Walk'd her good Angel. In that latest week  
Some treasures hidden ever near her heart  
She show'd me : faded flowers ; her mother's hair ;  
Gold pieces that have raised our chapel's Cross ;  
A riband by her youthful comrade worn :—  
Upon its cover some few words I found  
There traced when first beyond the western main



She heard the homeless cuckoo's cry well-known :  
"When will my People to their land return?"

From the first hour her grandchild sank, once more  
She that for years bed-ridden lay, had risen,  
And, autumn past, put forth a wintry strength,  
Ministering. Her frame was stronger than her  
mind ;

O'er that at times a dimness hung, like cloud  
That creeps from pine to pine. Inly she miss'd  
Her wonted place of homage lost ; she mused  
Sadly upon the solitary future ;  
But in her there abode a rock-like will,  
And from her tearless service night or day  
No man might push her. Seldom spake the woman :  
She call'd her grandchild by her daughter's name,  
(Her daughter buried thirty years and more,)  
And once she said in wrath, "Why toil they thus ?  
Nora is dead." She labor'd till the end :  
It came—that mortal close ! 'Twas Christmas Eve ;  
Far, far away were heard the city bells :  
The sufferer slept. At midnight I went forth ;  
Along the ice-film'd road a dull gleam lay,  
And a sepulchral wind in woods far off  
Sang dirges deep. Upon her crutches bent  
The aged woman stood beside the door,  
With that long gaze intense which is an act  
Silently looking toward that hill of graves  
We trod to-day ; a sinking moon shone o'er it—  
Then whisper'd she—the light of buried years  
Edging once more her eyes—"Each Saturday,  
Of those that in that churchyard sleep three Souls,  
Their penance done, ascend, and are with God."

Thus as she spake a cry was heard within,  
And many voices raised the Litany  
For a departing Soul. Long time—too long—  
Had seem'd that dying ! Now the hour was come,  
And change ineffable announced that Death  
At last was standing on the floor. O hour !  
When in brief space our life is lived again !  
Down cast the latest stake ! when fiends ascend,  
Beckoning the phantoms of forgotten sins  
Conscience to scare, or launching as from slings  
Temptations new ; while Angels hold before us  
The Cross unshaken as the sun in heaven,  
And whisper, "Christ." O hour ! when prayer is  
all ;

And they that clasp the hand are thrown apart  
By the world's breadth from that they love ! The  
act

Sin's dread bequest, that makes an end of sinning,  
Long lasted, while the heart-strings snapt, and all  
The elements of the wondrous sensuous world  
Slid from the fading sense, and those poor fingers,  
As the loose precipice of life down crumbled,  
Pluck'd as at roots. Storm-wing'd the hours rush'd  
by ;

There lay she like some bark on midnight seas,  
Now toiling through the windless vale, anon  
Hurled on and up to meet the implacable blast  
Upon the rolling ridge, when not a foot  
Can tread the decks, and all the sobbing planks  
Tremble o'erspent. The morning dawned at last,  
Whitening the frosty pane ; the lights removed,  
(Save that tall candle in her hand sustained



By others,) she descried it : " Ah ! " she said,  
 " Thank God ! another day ! " Then, noting one  
 Who near her knelt, she said, " The night is sped,  
 And you have had no sleep ; alas ! I thought  
 Ere midnight I should die." Her eyelids closed ;  
 Into a sleep as quiet as a babe's  
 Gradual she sank ; and while the ascending sun  
 Shot 'gainst the western hill his earliest beam,  
 In sleep, without a sigh, her spirit pass'd.

I would you could have seen her face in death !  
 I would you could have heard that last dread rite,  
 'The mighty Mother's, o'er the stormy gulf  
 And all the moanings of the unknown abyss  
 Flinging victorious anthems, or the strength  
 Of piercing prayer : " Oh ! ye at least, my friends.  
 Have pity on me ! plead for me with God ! "  
 That Rite complete, the dark procession wound  
 Interminably through the fields and farms,  
 While wailing like a midnight wind, the *keen*  
 Expired o'er moor and heath. At eve we reach'd  
 The graveyard ; slowly, as to-day, the sun  
 Behind a tomb-like bank of leaden cloud  
 Dropt while the coffin sank, and died away  
 The latest Miserere——

More than once

I would have ceased ; but he, my friend and guest,  
 Or touch'd or courteous, will'd me to proceed.  
 Perhaps that tale the wild scene harmonized  
 By sympathy occult ; perhaps it touch'd him,  
 Contrasting with his recent life—with England,  
 With Oxford, long his home ; its order'd pomp ;  
 Its intermingled groves, and fields, and spires,

Its bridges spanning waters calm and clear ;  
The frequentation of its courts ; its chimes ;  
Its sunset towers, and strangely youthful gardens  
That breathe the ardors of the budding year  
On the hoar breadth of grove-like cloisters old,  
Chapels, and libraries, and statued halls,  
England's still saintly City ! Time has there  
A stone tradition built like that all round  
Woven by the inviolate hedges, where the bird  
Her nest has made and warbled to her young,  
May after May secure, since the third Edward  
Held his last tournament, and Chaucer sang  
To Blanche and to Philippa lays of love—  
Not like Iernian records. Sad we rose,  
That tale complete ; and after silence, long,  
As homeward through the braided forest-skirt  
We trod the moonlight-spotted rocks, my friend  
Resumed, with pregnant matter oft more just  
In thought than application ; but his voice  
Was softer than it used to be. At last,  
After our home attain'd, we turn'd, and lo !  
With festal fires the hills were lit ! Thine eve,  
Saint John, had come once more ; and for thy sake,  
As though but yesterday thy crown were won,  
Amid their ruinous realm uncomforted  
The Irish people triumph'd. Gloomy lay  
The intermediate space ; thence brightlier burn'd  
The circling fires beyond it. " Lo ! " said I,  
" Man's life as view'd by Ireland's sons ; a vale  
With many a pitfall throng'd, and shade, and briar,  
Yet overblown by angel-haunted airs,  
And by the Light Eternal girdled round."

Brief supper passed, within the porch we sat  
As fire by fire burn'd low. We spake ; were mute ;  
Resumed ; but our discourse was gently toned,  
(Touched by a spirit from that wind-beaten grave,  
Which breathed among its pauses,) as of old  
That converse Bede records, when by the sea,  
'Twixt Tyne and Wear, facing toward Lindisfarne,  
Saxon Ceolfrid and his Irish guest,  
Evangelist from old Iona's isle,  
'Mid the half Pagan land in cloisters dim  
Discuss'd the Tonsure, and the Paschal time,  
Sole themes whereon, in sacred doctrine one,  
They differ'd ; but discuss'd them in such sort  
That mutual reverence deeper grew. We heard  
The bridgeless brook that sang far off, and sang  
Alone : for not among us builds that bird  
Which changes light to music, haply ill-pleased  
That Ireland bears not yet, in song's domain  
To Spenser worthy fruit. Our beds at last,  
Wearied, yet glad, we sought. Ere long the wind,  
Gathering its manifold voices and the might  
Of all its wills in valleys far, and roll'd  
From wood to wood o'er ridge and ravine, woke  
A hundred peaks to me by sound well known,  
That stood dark cluster'd in the night, and hung  
With rainy skirt o'er lake and prone morass,  
Or by sea-bays lean'd out procumbent brows,  
Waiting the rising sun.

At morn we met  
Once more, my friend and I. The evening's glow  
Had from his feelings pass'd : in their old channels

They flow'd, scarce tinged. But still his thoughts  
retain'd

The trace of late impressions quaintly link'd  
With kindred thought-notes earlier. Half his mind  
Scholastic was ; his fancy deep ; the age  
Alone had stamp'd him modern. Much he spake  
Of England wise and wealthy—now no more,  
He said, “a haughty nation proud in arms,”  
Nor, as in Saxon times, a crown'd child  
Propp'd 'gainst the Church's knee ; but ocean's  
Queen,

Spanning the world with golden zone twin-clasp'd  
By Commerce and by Freedom ! But no less  
Of pride and suffering spake he, and that frown  
Sun-press'd on brows once pure. Of Ireland next :—  
“How strange a race, more apt to fly than walk ;  
Soaring yet slight ; missing the good things round  
them,

Yet ever out of ashes raking gems ;  
In instincts loyal, yet respecting law  
Far less than usage : changeful, yet unchanged !  
Timid, yet enterprising : frank, yet secret :  
Untruthful oft in speech, yet living truth,  
And truth in things divine to life preferring :—  
Scarce men ; — yet possible angels ! — ‘Isle of  
Saints !’

Such doubtless was your land—again it might be—  
Strong, prosperous, manly never ! ye are Greeks  
In intellect, and Hebrews in the soul :—  
The solid Roman heart, the corporate strength  
Is England's dower !” “Unequally if so,”  
I said, “in your esteem the Isles are match'd :—

They live in distant ages, alien climes ;  
 Native they are to diverse elements :  
 Our swan walks awkwardly upon dry land ;  
 Your boasted strength in spiritual needs so helps you  
 As armor helps the knight who swims a flood."  
 He laugh'd. "At least no siren streams for us,  
 Nor holy wells ! We love 'the fat of the land,'  
 Meads such as Rubens painted ! Strange our fates !  
 Our feast is still the feast of fox and stork,  
 The platter broad, and amphora long-neck'd ;—  
 Ill sorted yoke-mates truly. Strength, meanwhile,  
 Lords it o'er weakness !" "Never yet," I answer'd,

"Was husband vassal to an intricate wife  
 But roar'd he ruled her ;" ere his smile had ceased,  
 Continuing thus : — "Ay ! strength o'er weakness  
 rules !

Strength hath in this no choice. But what is  
 Strength ?

Two Strengths there are. Club-lifting Hercules,  
 A mountain'd mass of gnarl'd and knotted sinews,  
 How shows he near the intense, Phœbean Might  
 That, godlike, spurns the ostent of thews o'er-  
 grown ;

That sees far off the victory fix'd and sure,  
 And, without effort, wings the divine death  
 Like light, into the Python's heart ?—My friend,  
 Justice is strength ; union on justice built ;—  
 Good-will is strength — kind words — silence — that  
 truth

Which hurls no random charge. Your scribes  
 long time

Blow on our island like a scythèd wind :  
The good they see not, nor the cause of ill :  
They tear the bandage from the wound half-  
heal'd :—

In not such onset weakness ? Were it better,  
Tell me, free-trader staunch, for sister Nations  
To make exchange for aye of scorn for scorn,  
Or blend the nobler powers and aims of each,  
Diverse, and for that cause correlative,  
True commerce, noblest, holiest, frankest, best,  
And breed at last some destiny to God  
Glorious, and kind to man ?—The choice is yours.

Thus as we spake, the hall clock vast and old,  
A waif from Spain's Armada, chimed eleven :  
And from the stables drew a long-hair'd boy  
Who led a horse as shaggy as a dog,  
A splenetic child of thistles and hill blast,  
Rock-ribb'd, and rich in craft of every race  
From weasel to the beast that feigns to die.  
Mounting—alas ! that friends should ever part,—  
My guest bade thus adieu :—"For good or ill  
Our lands are link'd." And I rejoined, "For  
which ?—

This shall you answer when, your pledge fulfill'd,  
Before the swallow you return, and meet  
The unblown Spring in our barbaric vale."

*ODE TO THE DAFFODIL.*

## I.

O LOVE-STAR of the unbeloved March,  
When, cold and shrill,  
Forth flows beneath a low, dim-lighted arch  
The wind that beats sharp crag and barren hill,  
And keeps unfilm'd the lately torpid rill !

## II.

A week or e'er  
Thou com'st, thy soul is round us everywhere ;  
And many an auspice, many an omen,  
Whispers, scarce-noted, thou art coming.  
Huge, cloud-like trees grow dense with sprays and  
buds,  
And cast a shapelier gloom o'er freshening grass,  
And through the fringe of ragged woods  
More shrouded sunbeams pass.  
Fresh shoots conceal the pollard's spike  
The driving rack outbraving ;  
The hedge swells large by ditch and dike ;  
And all the uncolor'd world is like  
A shadow-limn'd engraving.

## III.

Herald and harbinger ! with thee  
Begins the year's great jubilee !



Of her solemnities sublime  
(A sacristan whose gusty tape.  
Flashes through earliest morning vapor)  
Thou ring'st dark nocturns and dim prime.  
Birds that have yet no heart for song  
Gain strength with thee to twitter ;  
And, warm at last, where hollies throng,  
The mirror'd sunbeams glitter.  
With silk the osier plumes her tendrils thin :  
Sweet blasts, though keen as sweet, the blue lake  
    wrinkle ;  
And buds on leafless boughs begin  
Against grey skies to twinkle.

## IV.

To thee belongs  
A pathos drown'd in later scents and songs !  
Thou com'st when first the Spring  
On Winter's verge encroaches ;  
When gifts that speed on wounded wing  
Meet little save reproaches !  
Thou com'st when blossoms blighted,  
Retracted sweets, and ditty,  
From suppliants oft deceived and spited  
More anger draw than pity !  
Thee the old shepherd, on the bleak hill-side,  
Far distant eyeing leans upon his staff  
Till from his cheek the wind-brush'd tear is dried :  
In thee he spells his boyhood's epitaph.



To thee belongs the youngling of the flock,  
When first it lies, close-huddled from the cold,  
Between the sheltering rock  
And gorse-bush slowly over-crept with gold.

## v.

Thou laugh'st, bold outcast, bright as brave,  
When the wood bellows, and the cave,  
And leagues inland is heard the wave!  
Hating the dainty and the fine  
As sings the blackbird thou dost shine!  
Thou com'st while yet on mountain lawns high up  
Lurks the last snow-wreath:—by the berried  
breer  
While yet the black spring in its craggy cup  
No music makes or charms no listening ear.  
Thou com'st while from the oak stock or red beech  
Dead Autumn scoffs young Spring with splenetic  
speech;—  
When in her vidual chastity the Year  
With frozen memories of the sacred past  
Her doors and heart makes fast,  
And loves no flower save those that deck the bier:—  
Ere yet the blossom'd sycamore  
With golden surf is curdled o'er;  
Ere yet the birch against the blue  
Her silken tissue weaves anew.  
Thou com'st while, meteor-like 'mid fens, the weed  
Swims, wan in light; while sleet-showers whitening  
glare;—  
Weeks ere by river-brims, new furr'd, the reed  
Leans its green javelin level in the air.

## VI.

Child of the strong and strenuous East !  
 Now scatter'd wide o'er dusk hill bases,  
 Now mass'd in broad, illuminate spaces ;—

Torch-bearer at a wedding feast  
 Whereof thou may'st not be partaker,  
 But mime, at most, and merry-maker ;—  
 Phosphor of an ungrateful sun  
 That rises but to bid thy lamp begone :—

Farewell ! I saw

Writ large on woods and lawns to-day that Law  
 Which back remands thy race and thee  
 To hero-haunted shades of dark Persephoné.

To-day the Spring has pledged her marriage vow :

Her voice, late tremulous, strong has grown and  
 steady :

To-day the Spring is crown'd a queen : but thou

Thy winter hast already !

Take my song's blessing, and depart,

Type of true service—unrequited heart.

*A TALE*

## OF THE MODERN TIME.

## PART I.

## I.

AN old man once I knew whose aged hair

A summer brilliance evermore retained :

Youthful his voice and full, not flawed nor spare ;

His cheek all smooth, and like a child's engrained

Or marble altar innocently stained  
With roses mirrored in its tablet white—  
Like May his eye: his foot-fall slow but light.

## II.

Yet no one marvelled at him: of his ways  
Rarely men spake, as of the buried dead;  
And dropped him from their lips with trivial phrase.  
“Gentle he was, and kind,” the neighbors said,  
“Albeit an idle life, and vain, he led.”  
Odors he loved from flowers at twilight dim;  
And breath and song of morn: children loved him.

## III.

I have beheld him on a wintry plant  
An eye delighted bending full an hour,  
As though the Spring o'er every tendril scant  
Crept 'neath his ken! Methought he had the  
power  
To see the growing root plain as the flower.  
O'er a leaf's margin he would pore and gaze  
As o'er some problem of the starry maze!

## IV.

Over a rose his palm he loved to curve  
As though it brought him warmth from out the  
ground:  
Instinctively his step would often swerve  
Following slow streams that down in darkness wound:

His body there he bent above the sound,  
Heard but by him. Some virgin world he trod,  
As though it were the vesture of a god.

## V.

I wondered at him long: but youth and awe  
Restrained me from demanding of his story.  
At last, it chanced one day, this man I saw  
Reclining 'neath an oak rifted and hoary,  
Last tree of a wild, woodland promontory:  
Far round, below, the forest deep and warm  
Lay waving in the light of an illumined storm.

## VI.

I placed me at his feet: his eyes were closed—  
Celestial brightness hung upon his mien,  
And all his features, tranquilly composed:  
I gazed on him, and cried, "Where hast thou  
been  
In youth? What done, what read, what heard,  
what seen?"  
Irreverent was the inquest: yet the man  
Looked on me with a smile, and thus began.

## VII.

The Tale, true told, of every Human Being  
Were awful—yet upon each new-born child,  
As though none lived beside, the Eye All-seeing  
Rested in glory! Heaven looked down and smiled:

And choirs of joyful Angels undefiled  
Around the cradle sang, and evermore  
In youth walked near him, after, and before.

VIII.

Stranger! the veil of Sense in mercy hides  
The perils round us, as the mercies! Say,  
Amid the forests—on the mountain sides—  
What miles of mazes hast thou tracked to-day?  
Had some black chasm girt visibly thy way,  
Couldst thou secure have wandered thus? Not so—  
The danger is not ours while danger none we know.

IX.

My life hath been a marvel: thine no less.  
If thou that marvel hast not yet discerned,  
Lament not therefore. Unto wretchedness  
That Knowledge grew for which our parents  
yearned.  
The best and happiest oftime least have learned  
Of Man's dread elements—what dust—what spirit—  
That which we are, what have, what makè, and  
what inherit.

X.

Action in trance, in panic Thought were lost,  
If all we are we knew ourselves to be.  
O'er a great deep, now calm, now tempest-tossed,  
Rises one rock; but, hid below the sea,  
That rock slants down—a mountain! Such are we—

Our being's summit only o'er the deeps  
Ascends : the rest is blind, and in the abysses  
sleeps.

## XI.

In Man the Finite from the Depth ascends—  
Centre is Man of all men hear or see ;  
Chapel where Time with Incorruption blends,  
Where Dust is wedded to Divinity.  
All but omnipotent in Will is he.  
Freedom his awful privilege ! Like a God  
He walks at noon ; at night lies cold beneath the  
sod.

## XII.

Thou seekest Knowledge : every lore we prize  
But as a lamp thereby ourself to know.  
Stranger ! 'tis well within to turn our eyes.  
If we look heavenward, having turned them so,  
Horror unnamed, and phantom forms of woe  
Rebuke the haughtier quest. With single aim  
If thou my tale require, receive in joy the same.

## PART II.

## I.

HAPPY my childhood was ; devout and glad :  
My youth was full of glory, joy, and might,  
Like some volcanic morn, and tempest-clad,  
In tropic regions, when from gulfs of night  
Day leaps at once to the empyreal height.

Strength without bound in spirit, body, and soul,  
I felt: and in my rapture mocked control.

## II.

In the madness of that strength, I went abroad  
Where'er Ambition called, or Passion led:  
Full many a deep my ploughing bark hath scored:  
Full many a plain hath echoed to my tread:  
All enterprise I sought: all books I read:  
All thoughts I pondered, murmuring in my mirth  
That text, "Be thou, O Man, the Lord of Earth."

## III.

Deeply I studied, in all tomes and tongues,  
The Historic Legend, Philosophic page:  
More deeply yet those earlier mythic songs  
Built up by Bard for legislative Sage,  
Himself a builder up, from age to age,  
Of States—true poems—Policies sublime,  
Wherein well-balanced Functions metre make and  
rhyme.

## IV.

All Art and Science at the Gentile feast  
Of Western pride advanced, I knew right well:  
And laughed to mark the great Book of the East  
Push on through all, as through a garden dell  
Bright with pale flowers, and paved with glittering  
shell,  
Some Asian Elephant. I sought within  
For God, and there alone; and recked not of my sin.

## V.

Corporeal instincts only I denied:

My larger concupiscence temperance feigned.  
Humble oft seemed I through the excess of pride,  
And calm of conscious strength. No muscle strained;  
That which the eye desired, the hand attained.  
Too proud for Pride's less triumphs, I had sworn  
Such victories first to master,—then to scorn.

## VI.

Was I then wicked? Child! applauding nations,  
Such question asked, had called me great and good.  
I loved my kind—but more their acclamations:  
My thoughts were birds of prey, and snatched that  
food  
From weak and strong to gorge their infant brood:—  
Much knowing, this I knew not. But the hour  
Was come that proved at last my fancied power.

## VII.

One day a mountain's summit I was pacing:  
Through cloudy chasms the sunbursts fell thereon;  
Over its plains the mighty winds were racing,  
Quiring Eolian anthems in loud tone.  
Long time I walked in pride, and walked alone:  
And what I was revolved—and turned again,  
To mark the far off towns and visible main.



## VIII.

Man I considered then : and I looked forth  
Upon the works and wonders of his hand ;  
The deep his beaten road, his palace earth ;  
Commanding all things ; yet beneath command  
Of Mind—whereof I grasped the magic wand.  
—Fronting the sun, that set in blood, I saw  
Man's Shape against its disk ; and yet I felt not awe.

## IX.

All treasures of my Thought again I spread  
Unrolled as in a map before my eyes ;  
And walked among them with a conqueror's tread,  
That moves o'er fields of hard-won victories,  
Dreaming of mightier yet. A long disguise  
Fell from me in that rapture ; and I trod  
A worshipper no longer but a God !

## X.

Towards me a throne descended through the air—  
When lo ! the crown of my demoniac Pride  
Updrawn, raised up my horror-stricken hair !  
For, wheresoe'er I wandered, by my side  
Another step appeared to tread and glide :  
No mortal form was near : and in the abyss  
Of heaven, the mountain floors are echoless.

## XI.

I stopped ; it stopped : I walked ; it walked : I turned :  
My fears I mocked, unworthy of a man.  
Then a cold poison from that heart self-spurned  
Welled forth : and I, with eyes unfilmed, began  
Once more my life and inmost heart to scan :  
Till suddenly what shape in soul I was  
Before me I beheld plainly as in a glass.

## XII.

Then my disease I knew ; but not the cure :  
Lightning, sent flaming from the breast of heaven,  
Revealed my sins long-hid, from lure to lure :  
Beams from the eyes of God, like shafts were driven  
Against me : to her depth my soul was riven,  
Whereof each portion, conscious and amazed,  
In stupor of despair upon the other gazed.

## XIII.

Thus on my throne, that marble mountain height,  
My Soul I saw ! I went I know not whither :  
Down like a tempest fell from heaven the night :  
I heard the sea, and rushed in panic thither ;  
By ghost-like clouds, and woods my steps made  
wither,  
And rock, and chasm that seemed to gape and sever,  
I rushed—and rushed, methought, for ever and for  
ever.

PART III.

I.

I WOKE in a great cavern of the main :

The wave rolled in, upon its strong breast bearing  
A storm of icy wind and cloudy rain,

With sound as if of souls that died despairing :

The billows, that rough beach harrowing and tearing,  
Thundered far off : while morning, just begun,  
Peered dimly through the spray, and through the  
shadows dun.

II.

That shore was piled with death, like Nature's bier.

There, whitening spread a sea-beast's mouldering  
bones :

The rifted wings of a dead eagle here :

Over the wet cliff went funereal moans :

Yet calm at first I paced those wave-washed stones,  
Whose crash the deadlier sound awhile could quell  
Of that low step close by, my spirit's knell.

III.

Still, still, where'er I turned that step would follow.

My fate above me hung as by a thread :

Beneath me yawned the earth, a vast veiled hollow !

To battle-fields, athirst for death I fled.

Yet there, while headlong hosts beside me sped,  
That footstep still I heard and knew from all ;  
Now harsh, now dull as moth fretting a coffin's pall.

## IV.

Thick, thick like leaves from autumn's skeleton woods  
The shafts went by me, and as idly went.  
Then back I turned into my solitudes,  
As slow, in sullen cloud of rage o'er-spent,  
As mountain beast into dim forest tent,  
With hunger unabated, when the night  
Melts; and the eastern wolds spread wide in hated  
light.

## V.

Stranger! I tell you part: I speak not all.  
Thenceforth I walked alone; and joined my kind  
Only when lured by some black funeral:  
On capital cities oft, with watchings blind,  
I gazed, what time rushed forth the freezing wind  
Between their turrets and the wintry stars;  
All day I lay in tombs, or caves dim-lit with spars.

## VI.

On peaks eclipsing to its rim the ocean  
Hath been my dwelling: rivers I have seen  
Whose sound alone dispersed a gradual motion  
O'er cloud-like woods, their deep primeval screen.  
Sand-worlds my feet have trod beneath the sheen  
Of spheres unnamed. From zone to zone I fled,  
As though each land in turn grew fire below my tread.

## VII.

But Heaven had ended now my time of sorrow  
When most I seemed in penal horror bound :  
Dreamless one night I slept, and on the morrow  
Strange tears now first amid the dew I found  
Wherewith my heavy hair and cheeks were drowned.  
And in my heart, fanned by that morning air,  
There lay, as I walked on, my childhood's long-lost  
prayer.

## VIII.

Wearied, I sat upon a sunny bank,  
Ridged o'er a plain yet white with virgin snows,  
Though now each balmy noon, and midnight dank,  
Lightened the burden of the vernal rose ;  
My eyes (their wont it was till daylight's close)  
Fixed on my own still shadow—in that light  
Intense—keenly defined, and dark as night.

## IX.

I hung above it : sudden, by that shade  
Another Shadow rested ; faint and dim :  
At first I thought my tears the phantom made ;  
Then cried, " I do but dream it, form and limb."  
In horror then abroad I seemed to swim :  
Then my great agony grew calm and dumb ;  
For now I knew indeed my destined hour was come.

## X.

My spirit's Foe was now the spoil to claim  
My heart's chill seemed his hand upon my heart—  
O marvel! clearer while that Shade became,  
No mocking fiend, I saw, no lifted dart;  
But a dejected Mourner! down, apart,  
His head declined: one hand in grief he pressed  
Upon the heaving shadow of a sorrowing breast.

## XI.

The other round my neck was thrown, so fair,  
So kind, so gentle, none thereon might gaze,  
Nor feel that Love alone had placed it there!  
There dropped the cloud of my Self-haunted days.  
He who for years had tracked my wandering ways  
Had followed me in love! O Virgin-born,  
Thy Shadow was the light of my eternal morn!

## XII.

Stranger! there came a joy to me that hour;  
Such joy, that never can it leave my soul.  
All Heaven, condensed to one ambrosial flower,  
Fell on my bosom—Truth's inviolate whole!  
Obedience was the Way; Love was the Goal:  
God, the true Universe, around me lay:  
Systems and suns thenceforth were motes in that clear  
ray!

## XIII.

From that time saw I what 'tis Heaven to see,  
That God is God indeed, and good to Man :  
Theist then first. Who Love's Reality  
Hath proved, forgets himself to probe and scan.  
Knowledge for him remits her ancient ban :  
Back fly those demons, outwardly to sin  
That lure the soul, or turn our inquest sad within !

## XIV.

Then looked I up ; and drank from Heaven that light  
Which makes the world within, and world around,  
Alone intelligible, pure, and bright :  
My forehead then, but not by me, was crowned :  
Then my lost youth, no longer sought, was found :  
My penance then complete ; or turned to pain  
So sweet, the enamored heart embraced it like a gain.

## XV.

My kind, new-vested in the eternal glory  
Of God made Man, glorious to me became :  
Thenceforth those crowns that shine in mortal story  
I deemed it grief to bear, madness to claim.  
To be a man seemed now man's loftiest aim.  
True Rule seemed this—to wait on one the least  
Of those who fight God's fight, or join His kingly feast.

## XVI.

Then the Three Virtues bade me kneel and drink :  
Then the Twelve Gifts fell from the heavenly tree :  
Then from the Portals Seven, and crystal brink,  
Dread Sacraments and sweet came down to me.  
Then saw I plain that Saintly Company,  
Through whom, as Living Laws, that world which  
Sense  
Conceals, is ruled of God, by Prayer's omnipotence.

## XVII.

Thus in high trance, and the way unitive,  
I watched one year : which sabbath ended, God  
Stirred up once more my nest, and bade me live,  
Active and suffering. So again I trod  
The temporal storm, and wrestled with the flood ;  
And labored long ; and, by His grace, behold,  
Two grains I brought, or three, to swell the hills of  
gold.

## XVIII.

Lastly, my faculties of body and mind  
Decayed, through God's high will and boundless  
love ;  
And from the trunk whereon they grew declined,  
As leaves from trees, or plumes from moulting dove.  
Thenceforth, more blest, I soared no more, nor  
strove ;  
But sat me down, and wait the end, as waits,  
Sun-warmed, a beggar by great palace gates.



## XIX.

Stranger ! this tale of one man's life is over :

No knowledge mine in youth have I unlearned ;

But I the sense was gifted to discover

Of lore possessed long since, yet undiscerned :

Truths which, as abstract or remote, I spurned

In youth, as real most my heart now prizes ;

And, what of old looked real, now as dream despises ;

## XX.

Or but like dreams reveres. Hollow and vain

To me the pageants of this world appear ;

Or truth but symbolled to the truthful brain :

The future world I find already here ;

The un beholden palpable and dear :

Firm as a staff to lean on ; or a rod

Of power miraculous, and sent by God.

## XXI.

Stranger, farewell ! Far off a bell is tolling :

A bridal or a funeral bell—whate'er

It chaunts, in harmony the tones are rolling.

All bells alike summon mankind to prayer !

Yea, and for me those twain one day shall pair

Their blended chimes to one. When I am dead,

Stain not with tears my grave—it is a bridal bed.

## XXII.

He ceased. The inmost sense of that I heard

I know not : yet, because the man was wise,  
His legend I have written word for word.

All things hold meaning—to unclouded eyes

Where eagle never flew are auguries.

It may be then this weed some balm doth bear ;

Some cure for sight long dim—some charm against  
despair.

## SONG.

## I.

THOUGH oft beguiled, my friend, before,

Still, still permit me to beguile ;

Denounce not harshly, but deplore

My laugh, and it may end a smile :

To children more akin than you

We women are—we give them birth—

If we are sometimes childish too,

Be men, nor war with childish mirth !

## II.

Once on my head your hand you laid ;

I shook it thence ;—but 'twas an art

To hide from you how near it weighed

On that which shook beneath—my heart.

Go not : be cold, be stern, be mute ;  
Yet stay : lest I, who cannot choose  
But tremble sometimes at thy suit,  
At last should tremble to refuse.

## SONNET.

FLOWERS I would bring if flowers could make thee  
fairer,  
And music, if the Muse were dear to thee ;  
(For loving these would make thee love the bearer.)  
But sweetest songs forget their melody,  
And loveliest flowers would but conceal the wearer :—  
A rose I marked, and might have plucked ; but she  
Blushed as she bent, imploring me to spare her,  
Nor spoil her beauty by such rivalry.  
Alas ! and with what gifts shall I pursue thee,  
What offerings bring, what treasures lay before thee ;  
When earth with all her floral train doth woo thee,  
And all old poets and old songs adore thee ;  
And Love to thee is nought—from passionate mood  
Secured by joy's complacent plenitude !

## THE FALL OF RORA.

(FRAGMENT OF A LYRICAL DRAMA.)

SCENE—Outside Rora.

*Shepherds, Villagers, Arnold.*

ARNOLD.

LET all the women hence, and with the children  
Hide near yon chapel of old pines. The Marquis  
Advances ;—

See that all depart at once.  
No time remains for wailings or farewells :  
No, Shepherds, nor for wrath : the hour is come !

The offering which we offer up this day  
In steadfastness of spirit we must offer,  
And not in any passion. (To Gianavello.)

Place our men,  
As I have said, before their cottage homes.

GIANAVELLO.

A little further north—

ARNOLD. (*In a whisper.*)

What, know you not  
The entrance of the valley now is lost ?  
Would you deny them their high privilege  
Of dying near their homes—almost in sight

Of those that loved them, parents, brothers, children—

Our battle times are o'er: the end hath come.

THE BROW OF THE HILL BEFORE RORA.

*The Marquis of Pianessa and troops.*

PIANESSA.

I thank thee, Heaven! henceforth the way is smooth:  
No rocks, no pine-stems! O that drop by drop!  
How it made mad the thirst with which I burn!  
Henceforth we are as free as fire, and onward  
Rush, swift along the tempest of our rage.  
Pause here awhile. Give me a cup of wine.

OFFICER.

Quick, bring some wine.

PIANESSA.

See you that village yonder,  
With sunshine on its roofs? It smiles, like one  
Who boasts of some short-lived impunity!  
Glittering it stands among its orchards, bowers,  
And vines—look down—'tis Rora! ay, 'tis Rora!

*(Soldier brings wine.)*

Three hundred men, my best, from Burner's hill  
Were chased, a bloody track to Villaro!  
Fill up the cup—two hundred men were hurled  
From Peyro's summit to the waves beneath.

Fill up the cup—fill high—four hundred men  
Down Bosca's chasms were dashed from rock to  
rock—

*(Pauses—Officer presents the wine.)*

I will not drink it ! Wine no more, nor bread,  
Shall pass these lips, nor sleep assuage my breast,  
While stands in yonder village, roof or wall.—  
See you those rebels where they crowd ? Look on  
them !

Give me the cup—this wine shall be their blood.  
Thus, thus, I pour it forth upon the ground !

*(Pours the wine on the earth.)*

Ha, ha, ye thought not I could wait so long !  
Say, are the horses breathed ?

OFFICER.

All fresh.

PIANESSA.

Then on !

*Caverned rocks in the mountains above Rora.—Chorus  
of Virgins and Wives—Old Men, Children.*

A GIRL.

It thunders !

AN OLD MAN.

No, it is their meeting.

A WOMAN.

Ah !

Thus far, beyond the sight of this dread battle  
To wait the issue in suspense, and hear

No sound, but those fierce shouts, and our hearts'  
beating!

Hurl down, O wind, yon rocks! their jagged pines  
Leave half the vale exposed, yet hide the battle.

SECOND WOMAN.

A tenfold shout—now, now they meet. O heaven!

CHORUS.

Clouds above the dark vale streaming!

Onward rushing, swift and free!

Oh! that, as a mirror gleaming,

You might shew us all you see!

Glittering heralds you should be

Of a sun-bright victory!

FIRST SEMI-CHORUS.

Now the battle hosts are meeting—

Tangled now in mazy error;

Like whirlpools down a river fleeting—

I am blind with doubt and terror.

Better death, than doubt. O cease!

Be still, my heart, or burst. Peace, peace!

SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

Darkness and storm before him driven,

Ascending ever high and higher,

Yon Eagle cleaves the clouded heaven—

Lo! now sun-smitten, like a pyre

He burns! auspicious omen! we

Behold our Fate and Fame in thee!

## FIRST GIRL.

Have we judged well ?

## SECOND GIRL.

To give up all at once !  
The thought is glorious—

## WOMEN.

But the act ! woe, woe !

## FIRST SEMI-CHORUS.

I heard a voice : the clouds were fled ;  
All heaven hung vast and pure o'er head ;  
The mountain rock, and mountain sod,  
Lay steadfast, as the Word of God !  
I heard a voice : it spake to me,  
Far murmuring, "One hath died for thee,  
That thou shouldst live both just and free."

## SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

"For how," that deep voice murmured—"how  
Shall man to God his forehead bow,  
Unless he first that sign august  
Lift up—God's Image—from the dust ?  
Or how expand a chain-worn breast  
For Christ therein, an equal guest,  
To find his temple and his rest ?"



## FIRST WOMAN.

Alas! and see you those poor children straying  
Still on, by cavern, brake, and rifted pine?  
They seek, but hope no more to find the maid.

*(Children pass through the caverns singing.)*

## I.

We have sought her in her bower;  
In the garden we have sought her:  
In the forest, hour by hour,  
We have sought the chieftain's daughter.  
She that was to us so tender,  
Answer now she gives us none:  
She is gone we know not whither.  
If we knew where she is gone,  
We would gather flowers, and send her  
Those she loved, the last to wither.  
Agnes! our beloved! come,  
To thy children and thy home!

## II.

She was not like others, gay—  
But the mirthful loved her sadness:  
And the mourner oft would say,  
None could yield so soft a gladness.  
As a star, remote and lonely,  
Piercing depths of midnight woods,  
Makes the dark leaves dance in lightness;  
So into dejected moods,

She, that mournful lady only,  
Shone with beams of heavenly brightness.  
Agnes, O beloved ! come  
To thy children and thy home !

## III.

O beloved Agnes ! where,  
Where art thou so long delaying ?  
O'er what mountains bleak and bare  
Are thy tender feet a-straying ?  
They have told us thou art taken  
To some palace white like snow ;  
And some think that thou art sleeping :  
This we know not ; but we know,  
Every morning when we waken,  
All our lids are wet with weeping.  
O beloved Agnes ! come  
To thy children and thy home !

## CHORUS.

Hark, hark the Storm ! the voice not long  
Outstrips the Presence : see you now,  
Not leaves alone, but branch and bough !  
They roof the glen, a rushing throng,  
Fast borne in current fierce and strong !  
The cliffs that wall the vale are shaking :  
The forests to their heart are quaking !  
Crouch in caves who will : but I  
Exulting pace this platform high !

My panting soul, with joy o'er-awed,  
I cast upon the Storm abroad :  
And soon will hurl, inspired by Wrong,  
Thereon my vengeance and my song !

## WOMEN.

Is it the gasping of the Storm  
That makes her wan cheek red and warm ?  
Lo ! how she fixes now her eyes—

## CHORUS.

Catching the quickening impulse from those  
    kindling skies !  
See, see the Storm grows radiant now,  
As radiant as a lifted brow  
Too long abased ! lo, fast and wide,  
Avenging Forms the tempest ride ;  
And answer, round, above, and under,  
With choruses of rapturous thunder !  
Burst on the tyrant, Storm from God !  
Hurl them like leaves from rock to rock !  
Trample them down through clay and sod :  
From dark to dark !—their banners mock  
The purple and the blood-stained gold  
Thy clouds have vengefully unrolled—

## WOMEN.

She lifts her hands, and far away  
Flings forth the ban !

## CHORUS.

For Tyrants say  
That men were shaped but to obey :  
Dead spokes alone, to roll and reel,  
Within their car's revolving wheel !  
Let them take heed, for they have driven  
In frenzy o'er the rocky plain,  
Till earth's deep groans are heard in heaven,  
And fire bursts from those wheels amain—  
Not soon the stormy flames expire  
When hearts contagious in their ire  
Burst forth, like forests catching fire !

## II.

Or else this madness preys upon their spirit—  
That all good things to man's estate which fall  
Come from their sacred prescience—they inherit  
Wisdom divine to nurse this mundane ball !  
Yea, they apportion times ; with care dispensing  
The seasons ; when to sow, what days for reaping,  
What space for food and labor, praying, sleeping ;  
With stellar beams our harvests influencing ;  
Forth of the heaven of high conceit diffusing  
Sunshine and breeze amid our murmuring grain ;  
Showering the former and the latter rain—  
Or else with groans their vacant hours amusing,  
And sending forth a famine, to fulfil  
On men of froward heart the counsels of their will !  
Such airy dream to realize,  
All rights, all instincts they despise ;  
On every hearth they plant a foot,

Importunate, impure, and brute :  
Round every bed a serpent creeps :  
They make along the venom'd wall  
The hundred-footed Whisper crawl—  
But Vengeance in a moment leaps  
Forth from the frowning caverns of her noontide  
sleeps !

## FIRST WOMAN.

How her high passion teems with thoughts as high ;  
Like fire from the Earth's heart quickening the seeds  
In some volcanic soul to stateliest growth !  
Flushed is her cheek with crimson as she cowers  
Beneath their umbrage !

## CHORUS.

Ha ! how well  
That Chief made answer. At the door  
The herald stood, and shook all o'er ;  
And spake : " These tumults thou shalt quell ;  
Or else, a deep oath I have sworn,  
Thy wife, the children of thy joy,  
With fire in vengeance to destroy."  
Then made he answer, without scorn :  
" Their flesh thou mayest consume ; Time must :  
But I commend their spirits  
To God, in whom we trust."

## WOMEN.

See, see that man ! he's hurt—how goes the battle ?

MESSENGER.

Thrice have they rushed upon us : thrice fled back :  
They form for the last onset. Arnold sent me—  
He prays you to remove.

WOMEN.

We will not stir !  
Why should we move ?

MESSENGER.

The fight is worse than doubtful :  
Fresh troops are pouring on us—Christoval—  
Mario—the rest—have burst into the valley  
From every entrance. We are girt—surrounded—

CHORUS.

Fight to the death ! The Chieftain : lives he yet ?

MESSENGER.

He lives.

CHORUS.

And Gianavello ?

MESSENGER.

He is well.

WOMEN.

Ah ! tell us, tell us—no, no, tell us not—  
Tell us not who hath fallen.

MESSENGER.

Alas ! alas !

WOMEN.

Speak not ! speak not ! we will bind up thy wounds ;—  
Thou art too faint !

MESSENGER.

Alas, poor Marguerita !  
When all departed, she would not depart—

WOMEN.

Ah—what of her ?

MESSENGER.

A bullet pierced her heart :  
Staggering into her husband's arms she fell,  
Crying aloud, "'Tis nothing, love, 'tis nothing :  
It is God's will : fight thou unto the last ;"  
And so expired.

WOMEN.

Take, take that maid away—  
See, she has fallen upon the rock in swoon.

CHORUS.

Smooth song no more ; an idle chime !  
'Tis ours, 'tis ours, ere yet we die,  
To hurl into the tide of Time  
The bitter Book of Prophecy.

For ages we have fought this fight ;  
For ages we have borne this wrong.  
How long, Holy and Just ! how long,  
Shall lawless might oppress the right ?

No dreamy influence numbs my song !  
Too long suspended it has hung  
Like glaciers bending in their trance  
From cliffs, some horned valley's wall—  
One flash, from God one ireful glance,  
To vengeful plagues hath changed them all :—  
Down, headlong torrents ('tis your hour  
Of triumph) on the Invading Power !

Woe, woe to Tyrants ! Who are they ?  
Whence come they ? Whither are they sent ?  
Who gave them first their baleful sway  
O'er ocean, isle, and continent ?  
Wild beasts they are, ravening for aye ;  
Vultures that make the world their prey ;  
Pests, ambushed in the noontide day ;  
Ill stars of ruin and dismay !  
Tempestuous winds that plague the ocean :  
Hoar waves along some rock-strewn shore  
That rush and race, with dire commotion  
Raking those rocks in blind uproar !

FIRST WOMAN.

She sings aright : this music of her anger  
Makes my blood leap like founts from the warm earth :  
My chill is past.



SECOND WOMAN.

'Tis well. We shall die free !

CHORUS.

As though this Freedom they demand of us  
Were ours, at will to keep or to bestow !  
To them a boon profane, a gift of woe ;  
For us a loss fatal and blasphemous !  
This Freedom—man's dread Birthright of the Soul—  
It is not man's, nor under man's control :  
From God it comes ; His prophet here, and martyr ;  
Which when He gives to man, man's sword must  
guard :

No toy for sport ; no merchandise for barter ;  
A duty, not a boast ; the Spirit's awful ward !—  
Dread, sullen stillness, what art thou portending ?  
Once more each word I mutter on mine ear  
(Forward in anguish bending)

Drops resonant and clear—  
The forest wrecks, each branch and bough,  
O'er voiceless caves lie tranquil now :  
No sound, except the wind's far wail,  
Forth issuing through the portals of the vale,  
Now low, now louder and more loud,  
Under the bridge-like archway of yon low-hung cloud !

FIRST WOMAN.

O God, what light is that ? See, see, it spreads !  
The vale is all one flame—the clouds catch fire—  
Our hearths, our homes ! all lost—gone, gone, for  
ever !

## SECOND WOMAN.

It wakes another tempest ! From the gorges  
And deep glens on all sides the winds come rushing,  
And mate themselves unto that terrible flame,  
As we shake hands fiercely with our despair !  
Lo, once again that sound ! that flame, behold it !  
Once more it leaps off from its burning altar  
Up, up, to heaven—

## CHORUS.

To be our witness there !

## MESSENGER.

Arnold is dead ! He felt the wound was mortal.  
Then stood he up from slaying of his foes,  
And smiled, and gave this staff to me, and said :  
“ If there be yet one free spot left on Earth,  
Let them plant there this staff—  
And there, not on my grave, remember me ! ”

## CHORUS.

Is Arnold dead ?

## MESSENGER.

Arnold is dead : and with him  
The freedom of the mountain-land is dead.  
I too am dying ; take ye then this staff ;  
And if there be one free spot left on Earth,  
Plant it upon that spot : and be ye sure  
Forth from this root shall grow the goodliest tree  
That ever spread a green dome under heaven.

(Dies.)

FIRST SEMI-CHORUS.

Boast not, haughty conqueror !  
Not from thee hath fallen this woe :  
He, the Lord of Peace and War,  
He alone hath laid us low.  
Boast not, haughty conqueror !  
Slay, but boast not—Woe ! Woe ! Woe !

SECOND SEMI-CHORUS.

From Heaven the curse was shaken,  
On this predestined head :  
From thy hand the plague was taken ;  
By a mightier vengeance sped.  
Mine is the sorrow,  
Mine, and for ever ;  
Who can turn back again  
A mighty archer's arrow ?  
Who can assuage my pain ?  
Who can make calm my brain ?  
Who can deliver ?

CHORUS.

I.

But within me thoughts are rising,  
Severer thoughts, and soul-sufficing :  
Swift, like clouds in exhalation,  
Come they rushing : whilst a glory  
Falls on locks this fiery Passion  
Turns from black to hoary !

Voices round me borne in clangor  
Sound the trump of things to be :  
And heavenly flashes of wise anger  
Give my spirit light to see  
The great Future ; and aright  
Judge this judgment of to-night.

## II.

I trembled when the strife began—  
Praying, my clasped hands trembled,  
With ill-timed weakness ill dissembled :  
But now beyond the strength of man,  
My strength has in a moment grown ;  
And I no more my griefs deplore  
Than doth a shape of stone—  
A marble Shape, storm-filled, and fair  
With might resurgent from despair,  
I walk triumphant o'er my woe :  
For well I feel and well I know,  
That God with me this wrong sustains,  
And, in me swelling, bursts my chains !

## III.

And dost thou make thy boast then of their  
lying  
All cold, upon the mountain and the plain,  
My Sons whom thou hast slain ?  
And that nor tears nor sighing  
Can raise their heads again ?

My Sons, not vainly have ye died,  
For ye your Country glorified !  
Each moment as in death ye bowed,  
On high your martyred Souls ascended ;  
Yea, soaring in perpetual cloud,  
This earth with heaven ye blended—  
A living chain in death ye wove ;  
And rising, raised our world more near those worlds  
above !

## IV.

They perish idly ? they in vain ?  
When not a sparrow to the plain  
Drops uncared for ! Tyrant ! they  
Are radiant with eternal day !  
And oft, unseen, on us they turn  
Those looks that make us inly burn,  
And swifter through our pulses flow  
The bounding blood, their blood below !  
How little cause have those for fear  
Whose outward forms alone are here !  
How nigh are they to Heaven, who there  
Have stored their earliest, tenderest care !  
Whate'er was ours of erring pride,  
This agony hath sanctified.  
Our destined flower thy blasts but tear  
Its sacred seed o'er earth to bear !  
O'er us the storm hath passed, and we —  
Are standing here immovably  
Upon the platform of the Right ;  
And we are inwardly as bright

As those last drops which hang like fire  
Close-clustered on the piny spire,  
When setting suns their glories pour  
On yellow vales perturbed no more ;  
While downward from the eagle's wing  
One feather falls in tremulous ring,  
And far away the wearied storms retire.

## V.

I heard, prophetic in my dreams,  
The roaring of tumultuous streams,  
While downward, from their sources torn,  
Came pines and rocks in ruin borne :  
Then spake that Storm to me and said,  
"Quake thou with awe, but not with dread :  
For these are Thrones and Empires rolled  
Down Time's broad torrents, as of old. -  
But thou those flowers remember well,  
By foaming floods in peace that dwell ;  
For thus 'mid wrecks of fear and strife,  
Rise up the joys of hourly life ;  
And all pure bonds and charities  
Exhale their sweetness to the skies—  
But woe to haughtier spirits ! They,  
At God's command, are swept away,  
Into the gulfs that know not day."

## VI.

And now my Song is sung. I go  
Far up to fields of endless snow.

Alone till death I walk : unsoiled  
By air the tyrants have defiled.  
Over a cheek no longer pale  
I drop henceforth a funeral veil,  
And only dimmed and darkened see  
The mountains I have looked on free.  
Ye that below abide, unblest,  
Paint now no more with flowers yon dells ;  
Nor speak in tone like that which swells,  
Loud-echoed from the freeman's breast :  
In sable garments walk, and spread  
With cerements black your buried dead.  
Farewell to all : I go alone ;  
And dedicate henceforth my days  
To muse on God's high Will, and raise  
My hands toward th' eternal Throne—  
And I beneath the stars will thread  
The dark beads of my rosaries ;  
And ofttimes earthward bow my head,  
And listen ofttimes for the tread  
Of some far herald, swiftly sent,  
To crown with light a shape time-bent,  
And dry a childless widow's eyes  
With tidings grave of high content,  
Wherein unheeded prophecies  
Shall find their great accomplishment !





## SONNETS.

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“LE RECIT D'UNE SŒUR.”

### I.

WHENCE is the music? minstrel see we none ;  
Yet soft as waves that—surge succeeding surge—  
Roll forward—now subside—anon emerge—  
Upheaved in glory o'er a setting sun,  
Those beatific harmonies sweep on !  
O'er earth they sweep from Heaven's remotest verge,  
Triumphant Hymeneal, Hymn, and Dirge  
Blending in everlasting unison.  
Whence is the music? Stranger ! these were they  
That, great in love, by Love unvanquished proved :  
These were true lovers, for in God they loved :  
With God, these Spirits rest in endless day,  
Yet still for Love's behoof, on wings outspread  
Float on o'er earth, betwixt the Angels and the Dead !

## II.

## ALEXANDRINE.

Between two graves, a sister's grave and one  
Wherein the husband of her youth was laid,  
In countenance half a Spirit, half a Nun,  
She stood : a breeze that branch of jasmine swayed  
In her slight hand upholden : "Peace!" she said :  
A smile all gold to meet the sinking sun  
Came forth : the pale, worn face transfigured shone  
Sun-like beneath the sorrowing widow-braid.  
She raised that branch away her tears to wipe—  
"How happy seemed our life twelve years ago!  
I weep him still, but gaily weep at last!  
Like some sweet day-dream looks that earthly past :  
Of genuine joy the pledge it was, the type :—  
Now, now alone the joy itself I know!"

## III.

## A HAPPY DEATH.

"How many a dear unwedded maid there is  
Who—childhood's rapture over—thus might pray :  
'God, God alone, can be our endless bliss,  
Yet human love might have its little May!  
The troth, the trust, the ring, the bridal kiss—  
Had this been mine, I would not bid it stay!  
Had this been mine, a year, a month, a day,  
Had this been mine, and I been worthy this!  
In spotless Love, blessing, to have been blest ;  
To have felt Earth's Love pierced through by Love  
divine ;

Rest to have known in Love, and Love in Rest :  
Then the brief feast, contented, to resign ;  
To leave loved pledges with the loved—and die !'  
—Sister, my dream was such ; and lo, my wish  
have I."

## NATIONAL APOSTACY.

TRAMPLING a dark hill, a red sun athwart,  
I saw a host that rent their clothes and hair,  
And dashed their spread hands 'gainst that sunset  
glare,  
And cried, "Go from us, God, since God thou art !  
Utterly from our coasts and towns depart,  
Court, camp, and senate-hall, and mountain bare :  
Our pomp Thou troublest, and our feast dost scare,  
And with Thy temples dost confuse our mart !  
Depart Thou from our hearing and our seeing :  
Depart Thou from the works and ways of men ;  
Their laws, their thoughts, the inmost of their  
being :  
Black Nightmare, hence ! that earth may breathe  
again."  
"Can God depart?" I said. Then one replied,  
Close by—"Not so: each Sin at heart is *Deicide*."

## WINTER IN THE WOODS.

WHEN first the Spring her glimmering chaplets wove  
This way and that way 'mid the boughs high hung,  
We watched the hourly work, while thrushes sung  
A song that shook with joy their bowered alcove :  
Summer ere long o'er-arched with green the grove,  
And deepening shades to flower-sweet alleys clung :  
And last—one dirge from many a golden tongue—  
The chiding leaves with chiding Autumn strove.  
These were but Nature's preludes. Last is first !  
Winter, uplifting high both flail and fan,  
With the great forests dealt as Death with man ;  
And therefore through their desolate roofs hath burst  
This splendor veiled no more by earthly bars—  
Infinite heaven, and the fire-breathing stars !

## ST. CUTHBERT.

WHAT Power from Lindisfarne, the Holy Isle,  
Drove Cuthbert to an islet yet more lone ?  
What bound the Anchorite to a cell of stone  
By rough seas girt, and kept him glad the while ?  
Monks fly the world : he fled the Convent pile,  
The anthemed rites of matins, prime, and none :—  
What light was that which from his spirit shone  
And lit grey rocks with never-waning smile ?  
Love, mighty Love ! Nor bridegroom yet, nor  
bride

In converse tranced, or linked, remote, in thought,  
Has known his rapture ! Loving, yet with awe  
Thy Face, Eternal Love, for aye he saw :  
Therefore of that wild cave he wearied not :  
And in great peace his soul was satisfied.

## MONASTICISM.

THE Spirit hath its Passion as the Sense :  
A spiritual ear there is, a spiritual eye,  
A spiritual heart whose "fires of light" supply  
To the earthly heart Love's true Intelligence :  
And, answering these, beyond thy narrow fence,  
O Nature, spreads, remotest yet most nigh,  
That spiritual Universe of Deity  
Wherein alone Creation lives, and whence.  
Behold the things that *are* ! 'Tis we, alas,  
That shadow-charmed, and drowned in things that  
*seem*,  
Live without life, and die without a sign :  
Alone the life monastic spurns the dream,  
Crying to all the ages as they pass  
"The strongest of Man's loves is love Divine."

## POLAND AND RUSSIA.

## I.

WHEN, fixed in righteous wrath, a Nation's eye  
Torments some crowned Tormentor with just hate,  
Nor threat, nor flattery may that gaze abate :  
Unshriven the unatoning years go by :  
For, as that starry Archer in the sky  
Unbends not his bright bow, though early and late  
The Syren sings, and folly weds with fate,  
Even so that constellated Destiny  
Which keeps fire-vigil in a night-black heaven  
Upon the countenance of the doomed looks forth  
Consentient with a Nation's gaze on earth :—  
To the twinned Powers a single gaze is given :  
The earthly Fate reveals the Fate on high—  
A Brazen Serpent raised, that says not, "live,"  
but "die !"

## II.

The Strong One with the Weak One reasons  
thus :—  
"Through sin of thine our eagle wings are clipt :  
Through frost of thine our summer branch is nipt :  
Thy wounds accuse : thy rags are mutinous :  
The nations note thine aspect dolorous  
As some starved shape that cowers in charnel  
crypt,  
Or landscape in eclipse perpetual dipt,  
And, ignorant, cavil, not at thee but us !"

Then answer makes that worn voice, stern and slow :—

“Am I a dog the scourger’s hand that licks,  
And fattens? Blind reproof but spurns the pricks,  
That which I am thou mad’st me! long ago  
My face thou grav’dst to be a face of woe,  
Fixed as the fixed face of a Crucifix.”

GALATEA AND URANIA; OR, ART AND FAITH.

“DREAD Venerable Goddess, whom I fear,  
Gaze not upon me from thy starry height!  
I fear thy levelled shafts of ruthless light,  
Thine unfamiliar radiance and severe:  
Thy sceptre bends not! stern, defined, and clear  
Thy Laws: thy face intolerantly bright:  
Thine is the empire of the Ruled and Right:  
Never hadst thou a part in smile or tear!—  
I love the curving of the wind-arched billow;  
The dying flute tone, sweeter for its dying:  
To me less dear the Pine tree than the Willow,  
The mountain than the shadows o’er it flying—  
Thus Galatea sang, (whilst o’er the waters  
Urania leant :) and cowered ’mid Ocean’s foam-  
white daughters!

## DEATH.

GOD's creature, Death ! thou art not God's compeer !  
An Anarch sceptred in primordial night ;  
Immortal Life's eternal opposite :—  
Nor art thou some new Portent sudden and drear  
Blotting, like sea-born cloud, a noontide sphere :  
Thou art but Adam's forfeit by the might  
Of Calvary sunset-steeped, and changed to light ;  
To God man's access through the gates of Fear !  
Penance thou art for them that penance need ;  
To souls detached a gentle ritual ;  
Time's game reiterate and with lightning speed  
Played o'er ; through life a desert Baptist's call.  
Judgment and Death are woeful things, we know :  
Yet Judgment without Death were tenfold woe !

## KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

ROLL on by tower and arch, Autumnal River ;  
And ere about thy dusk yet gleaming tide  
The phantom of dead Day hath ceased to glide,  
Whisper it to the reeds that round thee quiver :—  
Yea, whisper to those ivy bowers that shiver  
Hard by on gusty choir and cloister wide,  
“ My bubbles break : my weed-flowers seaward slide :  
My freshness and my mission last for ever ! ”



Young Moon from leaden tomb of cloud that  
soarest,  
And whitenest those hoar elm-trees, wrecks for-  
lorn  
Of olden Airedale's hermit-haunted forest,  
Speak thus, "I died ; and lo, I am reborn !"  
Blind, patient Pile, sleep on in radiance ! Truth  
Dies not : and Faith, that died, shall rise in end-  
less youth.

## UNSPIRITUAL CIVILIZATION.

WE have been piping, Lord ; we have been singing !  
Five hundred years have passed o'er lawn and lea  
Marked by the blowing bud and falling tree,  
While all the ways with melody were ringing :  
In tented lists, high-stationed and flower-flinging  
Beauty looked down on conquering chivalry ;  
Science made wise the nations ; Laws made free ;  
Art, like an angel ever onward winging,  
Brightened the world. But O great Lord and Fa-  
ther !  
Have these, thy bounties, drawn to thee Man's race  
That stood so far aloof ? Have they not rather  
His soul subjected ? with a blind embrace  
Gulfed it in sense ? Prime blessings changed to  
curse  
'Twixt God and man can set God's universe.

## ON A RECENT VOLUME OF POEMS.\*

HID in each cord there winds one central strand :  
Hid in each breast a panting heart doth lie :  
Hid in the lines that map the infant's hand  
There lurks, men say, a life-long destiny :  
Through the dropt leaf 'gainst wintry sunset scanned  
Shines that fine net whose strong geometry  
Sustained the nascent shape, and each new dye  
Fed by Spring dews, by pensive Autumn fanned.  
Hid in this Book what note we? One Decree  
Writ by God's finger on a destined soul,  
That stamped each thought an act, and leaving free  
The spirit, shaped the life into a whole.  
What was that great behest—that mastering vow?  
England, when Christ hath conquered, answer thou!

## PENITENCE.

A SORROW that for shame had hid her face,  
Soared to Heaven's gate, and knelt in penance there  
Beneath the dusk cloud of her own wet hair,  
Weeping, as who would fain some deed erase  
That blots in dread eclipse baptismal grace :  
Like a felled tree with all its branches fair  
She lay—her forehead on the ivory stair—  
Low murmuring, "Just art Thou, but I am base."

\* By Dr. Newman.

Then saw I in my spirit's unsealed ken  
How Heaven's bright Hosts thrilled like the gems  
of morn  
When May winds on the sacred, snowy thorn  
The diamonds change to ruby. Magdalen  
Arose, and kissed the Saviour's feet once more,  
And to that suffering soul His peace and pardon  
bore.

## BOCCACCIO AND CERTALDO.

THE world's blind pilgrims, tendering praise for  
blame,  
Passing Certaldo, point, and smile, and stare,  
And with Boccaccio's triumph din the air:—  
Ah, but for him how high had soared thy fame,  
Italian Song! False Pleasure is a flame  
That brands the Muses' pleasaunce—burns it bare  
As some volcanic Island's barren glare:  
O Italy! exult not in thy shame!  
'Twas here, 'twas here thy Song's immortal river  
Lost its last sight of hoar Parnassus' head,  
And swerved through flowery meads to sandy bar:  
Its saintly mission here it spurned for ever:  
It sighed to Laura, and with Tancred bled:  
But caught no second gleam from Dante's star!

## A NIGHT ON THE GENOESE RIVIERA.

FANNED by sweet airs the road along the cliff  
Wound in the moonlight, glistening now, now dim ;  
So winds a silver snake in pale relief  
Girdling a sacrificial beaker's brim :  
Black rocks loomed forth in giant hieroglyph  
O'er silken seas : amid their shadows grim  
From lowly town dim-lit, or dancing skiff,  
At times the song was borne, at times the hymn.  
Star after star adown the blue vault sliding  
Their bright hair washed successive in the wave,  
Till morning, from her far purpureal cave  
Issuing, and o'er the foamless billows gliding,  
Leaped, as the bells rang out from tower and shrine,  
Up from her sea-bath to the hills of pine.

## WRITTEN ON A SPOT BY THE ROTH, NEAR AMBLESIDE.

I WALKED in dream. Alone the bright Boy stood  
Half imaged in the waters round his feet :  
His line had just been cast into the flood,  
Then first ; his glance leaped forth the spoil to  
meet !  
The gold-brown curls about him waved, and sweet  
The blithesome smile of parted lips ; the blood

Flushing the fresh cheek like a rose whose hood,  
With night-dews glittering, airs of morning greet.  
Ah me ! Since that glad moment sixty years,  
Snow-laden, on their wintry pinions froze  
Have sailed beyond the limit of our spheres,  
And like that fleeting pageant are no more.  
That Boy my Father was ! the autumnal day  
He led me to that spot his hair was grey !

October 17, 1862.

#### COMMON LIFE.

ONWARD between two mountain warders lies  
The field that man must till. Upon the right,  
Church-thronged, with summit hid by its own height,  
Swells the white range of the Theologies :  
Upon the left the hills of Science rise  
Lustrous but cold : nor flower is there, nor blight :  
Between those ranges twain through shade and light  
Winds the low vale wherein the meek and wise  
Repose. The knowledge that excludes not doubt  
Is there ; the arts that beautify man's life :  
There rings the choral psalm, the civic shout,  
The genial revel, and the manly strife :  
There by the bridal rose the cypress waves :  
And there the all-blest sunshine softest falls on  
    graves.

## MODERN DESPONDENCY.

WRITTEN IN DEVONSHIRE.

SOFT land, and gracious as some nectarous fruit  
In whose warm bosom Autumn's heart is glad,  
Thou hadst of old thy Bards,\* whose lyre and lute  
Well praised thy meads and woodlands blossom-  
clad :

Thou hadst thy blithesome days ! If ours be sad,  
May thy blue bays and orchards never mute  
That sadness charm—slay causeless sorrow's root—  
Loveless Self-Will, the Pride that maketh mad !  
Wed, blameless Nature, wed with Grace Divine  
Once more, like sweet harps blent with sweeter  
voices,

Thy powers :—then sing, till child and man rejoices  
Betwixt those “Double Seas” of England ! Shine,  
Sun of past years ! Disperse those modern glooms  
At least from golden Devon's Tors and Combes !

## INDUSTRY.

VIRTUE defamed for sordid, rough, and coarse,  
Unworthy of the glimpses of the moon,  
Praise of the clown alone whose heavy shoon  
Kneads the moist clay, nor spares the pure stream's  
source,

\* Herrick, William Brown, and others.

In thee how strong is grace ! how fair is force !  
How generous art thou, and to man how boon !  
Not thine the boastful plain with carnage strewn,  
Nor chambers wassail-shamed where late Remorse  
Sits, the last guest ! From ocean on to ocean,  
From citted shore to hills far-forested,  
The increase of earth is thine, in rest or motion ;  
The crown is thine on every Sage's head ;  
The ship, the scythe, the rainbow among flowers—  
Thine too the song of girls exulting 'mid their  
    bowers.

## TO COLERIDGE.

WRITTEN IN EARLY YOUTH.

As one who lies, when day is almost done,  
Rocked in a little boat upon a sea  
Whose glassy billows heave eternally  
Albeit the winds are lulled, watching the sun  
That sinks behind those billows, and anon  
Uprises, while the orange gleams that dye  
The minster windows of the western sky  
Are imaged in the waters smooth and wan ;  
Coleridge ! thus hang we on the mystic traces  
Of that one Thought which feeds thy soul with  
    light ;  
Thus falls the "Idea of the Infinite"  
Upon our dazzled lids and luminous faces ;  
Thus sinks, and reappears, and mocks our sight,  
Absorbed once more in the great deep's embraces.

## PONTEFRACT CASTLE.

WIND-WASTED castle without crown of towers !  
 Dread dungeon keep, watching the dying day !  
 A crownless king, great Edward's grandson,\* lay  
 Wasting in thee, and counting prisoned hours !  
 A century passed : The Faith's embattled Powers  
 Thus far advanced ; here stood, a stag at bay :  
 The eighth Henry trembled in his blood-stained  
     bowers ;—  
 Thou saw'st that " Pilgrimage of Grace " decay !  
 Two Woes thou saw'st—the fall of England's Crown,  
 That drowned in blood her old Nobility ;  
 Then, baser plague, the old Temples trampled down  
 By Despots new ! Twice-doomed ! the fount in  
     thee  
 I mark of that Red Sea which rolls between  
 England that is, and England that hath been !

## TO THE MOST FAIR.

FAIR, noble, young ! Of thee I thought to sing,  
 (If so Love willed, and the ever-virgin Muse  
 Who cannot grace accord unless Love choose,  
 Were pleased from Love's first bath, the Thespian  
     Spring  
 One flower, or sparkling drop, on me to fling,)  
 For oft-times thus some clan barbaric strews

\* Richard II.



Its earth and wood, the little island's dues,  
Before his feet whom conquest made its King :—  
So dreamed I, when, a mourner sad and stern,  
The Muses' Mother fixed on me her eyes—  
Memory—nor slow their meaning to discern  
Like a child stung I dropped the forfeit prize.  
Some holier hand from out the immortal river  
The destined reed must draw, and hymn thy praise  
for ever !

## FROM PETRARCH.

THAT nightingale which wails with such sweet woe  
Haply its young ones, haply its dear mate,  
Fills the dark heavens, and makes the fields over-  
flow

With its wild, broken chaunt disconsolate :  
Beside me all night long, where'er I go,  
Its dirge reminds me of my own sad fate,  
And chides my blindness which refused to know  
That Death divine things too can subjugate.  
Ah ! easy 'tis to cheat the self-deluded !  
Yet who had ever dreamed those sunlike eyes  
Setting, should leave the world in darkness shrouded ?  
But I my pain's high mission recognize—  
It means that I should weep and live, and so  
Learn that delight abides not here below !

## FROM PETRARCH.

AH me! how beauteous were those tears of hers  
The gathered cloud of Passion, melting, bred  
When that deep grief whereon her heart had fed  
Rose to her eyes, those tender, starlike spheres!  
Wandered adown her delicate face her tears,  
Wandered o'er pale cheeks touched with faintest  
red,  
As some clear stream through meads with flowers  
o'erspread  
(White flowers with sanguine mingled) softly steers.  
Love in that rain bewitching stood embowered  
Like blithesome bird on whom the longed-for rays  
Blended with drops of gentlest rain are showered,  
And, weeping 'mid his home in those fair eyes,  
Shot from the bosom of that sad, sweet haze  
Gleams of an ever-brightening Paradise!

## A WARNING.

WHY, if he loves you, Lady, doth he hide  
His love! So humble is he that his heart  
Exults not in some sense of new desert  
With all thy grace and goodness at his side?  
Ah, trust not thou the love that hath no pride,  
The pride wherein compunction claims no part,  
The callous calm no doubts confuse or thwart,

The untrembling hope, and joy unsanctified !  
He of your beauty prates without remorse :  
You dropped last night a lily ; on the sod  
He let it lie, and fade in nature's course :  
He looks not on the ground your feet have trod :  
He smiles but with the lips, your form in view ;  
And he will kiss one day your lips—not you.

## PRINCIPLE A POWER ; OR LOGIC IN HISTORY.

Lo ! as an Eagle battling through a cloud  
That from his neck all night the vapor flings,  
And ploughs the dark, till downward from his wings  
Fierce sunrise smites with light some shipwrecked  
crowd  
Beneath a blind sea-cavern beat and bowed ;—  
Thus through the storm of Men, the night of Things,  
That Principle to which the issue clings  
Makes fateful way, and spurns at last its shroud.  
There were that saw it with a sceptic ken :  
There were that saw it not through hate or pride :  
But, conquering and to conquer, on it came,  
No tool of man but making tools of men,  
Till Nations shook beneath its advent wide,  
And they that loosed the Portent rued the same.

## COMPOSED AT RYDAL.

SEPTEMBER, 1868.

THE last great man by manlier times bequeath'd  
To these our noisy and self-boasting days  
In this green valley rested, trod these ways,  
With deep calm breast this air inspiring breathed ;  
True bard, because true man, his brow he wreathed  
With wild-flowers only, singing Nature's praise ;  
But Nature turn'd, and crown'd him with her bays,  
And said, "Be thou *my* Laureate." Wisdom sheath'd  
In song love-humble ; contemplations high,  
That built like larks their nests upon the ground ;  
Insight and vision ; sympathies profound  
That spann'd the total of humanity—  
These were the gifts which God pour'd forth at large  
On men through him ; and he was faithful to his  
charge.

## TO WORDSWORTH.

ON VISITING THE DUDDON.\*

## I.

So long as Duddon 'twixt his cloud-girt walls  
Thridding the woody chambers of the hills  
Warbles from vaulted grot and pebbled halls  
Welcome or farewell to the meadow rills ;  
So long as linnets chant low madrigals  
Near that brown nook the laborer whistling tills,

\* See Wordsworth's "Sonnet to the Poet Dyer."

Or the late-reddening apple forms and falls  
'Mid brakes whose heart the autumnal redbreast thrills,  
So long, last Poet of the great old race,  
Shall thy broad song through England's bosom roll,  
A river singing anthems in its place,  
And be to later England as a soul.  
Glory to Him who made thee, and increase  
To them that hear thy word, of love and peace !

## II.

When first that precinct sacrosanct I trod,  
Autumn was there, but Autumn just begun ;  
Fronting the portals of a sinking sun  
The queen of quietude in vapor stood,  
Her sceptre on the dimly-crimson'd wood  
Resting in light. The year's great work was done ;  
Summer had vanish'd, and repinings none  
Troubled the pulse of thoughtful gratitude.  
Wordsworth ! the autumn of our English song  
Art thou :—'twas thine our vesper psalms to sing :  
Chaucer sang matins ;—sweet his note and strong ;  
His singing-robe the green, white garb of Spring :  
Thou like the dying year art rightly stoled—  
Pontific purple and dark harvest gold.



## THE WORLD'S WORK.

WHERE is the brightness now that long  
Brimmed saddest hearts with happy tears?  
It was not Time that wrought the wrong:  
Thy three-and-twenty vanquished years  
Crouched reverent, round their spotless prize  
Like lions awed that spare a Saint;  
Forbore that face—a paradise  
No touch autumnal ere could taint.

It was not sorrow. Prosperous love  
Her amplest streams for thee poured forth,  
As when the Spring in some rich grove  
With blue-bells spreads a sky on earth.  
Subverted Virtue! They the most  
Lament, that seldom deign to sigh;  
O World! is this fair wreck thy boast?  
Is this thy triumph, Vanity?

What power is that which, being nought,  
Can unmake stateliest works of God?  
What brainless thing can vanquish thought?  
What heartless, leave the heart a clod?  
The radiance quench, yet add the glare?  
Dry up the flood;—make loud the shoal?  
And, merciless in malice, spare  
That mask, a face without a soul?

Ah Parian brows that overshadowed  
Eyes bluer than Egean seas !  
One time God's glory wrote thereon  
Goodwill's two Gospels, Love and Peace.  
Ah smile ! Around those lips of hers  
The lustre rippled and was still,  
As when a gold leaf falling stirs  
A moment's tremor on the rill !

### THE CHURCH'S WORK.

HER coral lip a sun-beam smote :  
Behind her shapely head  
The white veil refluxed seemed to float  
Like clouds in ether spread :  
She looked so noble, sweet, and good,  
Love clapped his hands for glee,  
And cried, "This, this is Womanhood—  
The rest but female be !"

So modest, yet confiding too—  
So tender to bestow  
On each that loving honor due  
To all things, high or low,  
Her soft self-reverence part had none  
In consciousness or pride,  
A reflex of that worship won  
From her by all beside.



So creaturely in all her ways,  
So humbly great she seemed—  
O Grecian lays, O Pagan praise,  
Of such ye never dreamed !  
Through sunshine on she moved as one  
Innocuously possest  
(Thy lot reversed, O Babylon !)  
By some angelic guest.

Buoyant as bird in leafy bower,  
As calm she looked as those  
Who long have worn the nuptial flower  
Upon their matron brows:  
Yet ten years hence, when girl and boy  
May mount her lap at will,  
That virgin grace, that vestal joy  
Now hers will haunt her still !

*A GIRL'S SONG.*

UNKIND was he, the first who sang  
The spring-tide shamed, the flower's decay !  
What woman yet without a pang  
Could hear of Beauty's fleeting May ?  
O Beauty ! with me bide, and I  
A maid will live, a maid will die.

Could I be always fair as now,  
And hear, as now, the Poets sing  
"The long-lashed eyes, the virgin brow,  
The hand well worthy kiss and ring,"  
Then, then some casual grace were all  
That e'er from me on man should fall!

I sailed last night on Ina's stream :  
Warm 'mid the wave my fingers lay ;  
The cold-lipped Naiad in my dream  
Kissed them, and sighed, and slipped away—  
Ah me ! down life's descending tide  
Best things, they say, the swiftliest glide.

*A SONG OF AGE.*

## I.

WHO mourns? Flow on, delicious breeze!  
Who mourns, though youth and strength go by?  
Fresh leaves invest the vernal trees,  
Fresh airs will drown my latest sigh.  
What am I but a part outworn  
Of earth's great Whole that lifts more high  
A tempest-freshened brow each morn  
To meet pure beams and azure sky?

## II.

Thou world-renewing breath, sweep on,  
And waft earth's sweetness o'er the wave!  
That earth will circle round the sun  
When God takes back the life He gave!  
To each his turn! Even now I feel  
The feet of children press my grave,  
And one deep whisper o'er it steal—  
"The Soul is His Who died to save."

## STANZAS.

HER kiss, ere yet he snatched it thence  
On lips like rose-leaves twice had trembled:  
The Bard, and Love's Intelligence  
Marked the brief trifle ill-dissembled:

Far off a horse's hoof we heard:  
She turned: her sunny blush we noted:  
She sang as sings the enamored bird—  
That kiss within her fancy floated.

And just ere yet he reached the door,  
So shook that white vest ringlet-shaded,  
Such sweetness sank those eyelids o'er,  
I knew that in her heart she made it!

Ah Girl! ah Child! To men a kiss  
Is oft a seal, dissolved or broken:  
To Maids the seal impressed it is—  
Truth's solemn pledge—Joy's laughing token!

## LINES.

ONLY a reed that sighed:—  
And the Poplar grove hard by  
From a million of babbling mouths replied,  
“Who cares, who cares? Not I!”

Only a dove's low moan:—  
And the new-gorged raven near  
Let fall from the red beak the last white bone,  
And answered, half croak, half sneer.

The pale, still face too soon  
Was paler, stiller thrice:  
And ere the rose burst in the breast of June  
The young, warm heart was ice.

## SAD MUSIC.

DESCEND into the depths forlorn  
Of this obscured and silent soul,  
O Song! With gradual breath, like morn,  
Our spirits touch, and make them whole!

Blot thou base worlds, and make us see  
Those pitying Presences which stand  
Round sensuous life perpetually,  
And beckon to the Spirit-land.

Teach us to feel the Truths we know:  
The shores we tend to—draw them nigh:  
The things that leave us—bid them go  
With modulated movement by.

Song sad and sweet, the power be thine  
Breeze-like o'er life's suspended wreath  
To sprinkle freshening dews benign,  
And waft us toward the gates of Death

With happier grace than his who reared  
The mild Caducean wand, and led  
O'er Lethe's wave, no longer feared,  
The pensive Shades of Heroes dead.

## LINES.

CAN a man sit mute by a fast-barred door  
While the night-showers cut through the shivering skin,  
Yet love in her hardness, love on, love more,  
That cold-eyed Beauty who smiles within?  
Such a man—he is dead long since—I knew:  
There was one that never could know him—You !

Can a man from the gunwale his grasp relax  
Nor bend his brow, as he sinks in the tide,  
At the veil held back by the hand of wax  
That might have saved him, yet help denied?  
Such a man—he is dead at last—I knew:  
There was one who never could know him—You !

My friend is dead :—it was time he died !  
His heart was yours while a pulse remained :  
Red lips, do ye chide for pity or pride  
That the beaker ye quaffed so often is drained?  
By that hand of wax, by that eye's cold blue,  
The prize he lost was a loss for two !

MARCH OMENS.

ON ivied stems and leafless sprays  
The sunshine lies in dream :  
Scarcely yon mirrored willow sways  
Within the watery gleam.

In woods far off the dove is heard,  
And streams that feed the lake ;  
All else is hushed save one small bird  
That twitters in the brake.

Yet something works through earth and air,  
A sound less heard than felt,  
Whispering of Nature's procreant care,  
While the last snow-flakes melt.

The year anon her rose will don ;  
But to-day this trance is best—  
This weaving of fibre and knitting of bone  
In Earth's maternal breast.

## FEBRUARY.

WHAT dost thou, laggard Daffodil,  
Tarrying so long beneath the sod?  
Hesper, thy mate, o'er yonder hill  
Looks down and strikes with silver rod  
The pools that mirrored thee last year,  
Yet cannot find thee far or near.

Pale Primrose! for a smile of thine  
Gladly to earth these hands would pour  
An ivied urn of purple wine,  
Such as at Naxos Bacchus bore,  
Watching with fixed black eyes the while  
That pirate barque draw near his isle!

Shake down, dark Pine, thy scalp of snow—  
False witch, stripped bare, grim Ash-tree tall!  
Ye ivy masses that now swing slow  
Now shudder in spasms on the garden wall,  
Shake down your load and the borders strew;  
The rosemary borders and banks of rue.

The Robin, winter's Nightingale,  
Hung mute to-day on the blackthorn brake:  
We heard but the water-fowl pipe and wail  
Fluting aloud on the lake;  
Who hears that bell-note so clear and free  
Though inland he stands, beholds the sea.



As the moon that rises of saffron hue  
Ascending, changes to white,  
So the year, with the Daffodil rising new,  
On Narcissus will soon alight :—  
Rise up, thou Daffodil, rise ! With thee  
The year begins, and the spring-tide glee !

*WITH A BOOK OF VERSE.*

HE knew not, he that wrote this book,  
Thine eyes should one day glance thereon :—  
So shines Aurora on a brook :  
Her splendor spreads ; the brook is gone.

Her glory dawns from height to height :  
He sinks through forest shades beneath :  
Fate drags him down through caves of night  
Low-chaunting lessening songs of death.

Ah me, Aurora ! smile but thou  
On one poor page with beam benign !  
No meaner radiance needs the brow,  
Or book, refreshed with light of thine !

*APPEARANCES.*

SCIENCE her sunless vigil kept  
In soundings of a league-deep sea:  
The Hour had come: the Hour on swept  
From Time into Eternity.

Ambition o'er the hills of War  
Tracked the red path which goal hath none,  
Following its blind on-rushing star  
That circles round no central sun.

O'er palace fronts Imperial pride  
Raised the rich fretwork high and higher:  
Through all its worlds, on wind and tide  
Trade rolled the wheels that never tire.

The Lover nursed his hectic dream;  
The Poet wailed a glory dead;  
The Enthusiast chased a flying gleam,  
While, winged with Fate, the Hour on sped.

They sowed, they reaped, they woke, they slept:  
Free changed to bond, and bond to free:  
Realm strove with realm, and sept with sept—  
These were the things that seemed to be.

That hour, unnoticed and unknown,  
An orphan laid him down to die:  
That hour God reaped what God had sown:  
That was alone Reality.

## DEATH.

FROM death the strongest spirit shrinks,  
For mystery veils the last dread strife:  
None loves to die. And yet methinks  
We have been dying all our life.

When first thy childhood sang its hymn  
Above the opening bud, that hour  
Thine Infancy with eyelids dim  
Lay cold in death, a faded flower!

When Youth in turn its place had won,  
What whispered Childhood's ebbing breath?  
Sad words it sighed o'er bright things gone,  
And that First Sin, true Childhood's death.

And Youth was dead ere Manhood came:  
And Wisdom's fruits of bitter taste  
Were rooted in a soil of shame,  
Poor funeral fruits of manhood's waste.

O Life, long-dying, wholly die,  
That Death not less may die at last:  
And live, thou great Eternity  
That Present art at once and Past!

ST. COLUMKILL'S FAREWELL TO THE  
ISLE OF ARRAN, ON SETTING SAIL  
FOR IONA.\*

FROM THE GAELIC.

FAREWELL to Arran Isle,† farewell!  
I steer for Hy:‡ my heart is sore:—  
The breakers burst, the billows swell  
'Twixt Arran Isle and Alba's§ shore.

Thus spake the Son of God, "Depart!"—  
O Arran Isle, God's will be done!  
By Angels thronged this hour thou art:  
I sit within my bark alone.

O Modan, well for thee the while!  
Fair falls thy lot, and well art thou!  
Thy seat is set in Arran Isle:  
Eastward to Alba turns my prow.

O Arran, Sun of all the West!  
My heart is thine! As sweet to close  
Our dying eyes in thee as rest  
Where Peter and where Paul repose!

\* From the prose translation in vol. i. of the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society*, Dublin, 1808.

† In the Bay of Galway. It was one of the chief retreats of the Irish monks and missionaries, and still abounds in religious memorials.

‡ Iona.

§ Scotland.

O Arran, Sun of all the West!

My heart in thee its grave hath found:  
He walks in regions of the blest  
The man that hears thy church-bells sound!

O Arran blest, O Arran blest!

Accursed the man that loves not thee!  
The dead man cradled in thy breast—  
No demon scares him: well is he.

Each Sunday Gabriel from on high  
(For so did Christ our Lord ordain)  
Thy Masses comes to sanctify,  
With fifty Angels in his train.

Each Monday Michael issues forth  
To bless anew each sacred fane:  
Each Tuesday cometh Raphael  
To bless pure hearth and golden grain.

Each Wednesday cometh Uriel,  
Each Thursday Sariel, fresh from God;  
Each Friday cometh Ramael  
To bless thy stones and bless thy sod.

Each Saturday comes Mary,  
Comes Babe on arm, 'mid heavenly hosts!  
O Arran, near to heaven is he  
That hears God's Angels bless thy coasts!

## CHARITY.

THOUGH all the world reject thee, yet will I  
Fold thee, with all thine errors, in my heart,  
And cherish even thy weakness! Who can say  
That he is free from sin; or that to him  
Belongs to speak the judgments of the Lord,  
To vindicate the dignity of Heaven?  
Behold the Master! prostrate at His feet,  
Shuddering with penitential agony,  
Magdalen! O those mild forgiving eyes,  
Mercy and pity blossoming in Love!  
O lips full founts of pardon and of blessing!  
Shall I, a sinner, scorn a sinner, or  
Less love my brother seeing he is weak?  
Shall not my heart yearn to his helplessness  
Like the fond mother's to her idiot boy?  
O cruel mockery, to call that love  
Which the world's frown can wither! Hypocrite!  
False friend! Base selfish man! fearing to lift  
Thy soiled fellow from the dust! From thee  
The love of friends, the sympathy of kind  
Recoil like broken waves from a bare cliff,—  
Waves that from far seas come with noiseless step  
Slow stealing to some lonely ocean isle;—  
With what tumultuous joy and fearless trust  
They fling themselves upon its blackened breast,  
And wind their arms of foam around its feet,  
Seeking a home; but finding none, return  
With slow, sad ripple, and reproachful murmur.  
No! No! True Charity scorns not the love  
Even of the guiltiest, but treasures up

The precious gift within its heart of hearts,  
Freely returning love where wanted most,  
Like flowers that from the generous air imbibe  
The essences of life, and give them forth  
Again in odors. Spirit of Love Divine  
That filled'st with tenderness the reverent eyes  
Of Mary as she gazed upon her Babe,  
Soften our stony nature ; make us know  
How much we need to be forgiven ; build up  
True Charity on humbleness of heart.

S. E. DE VERE.

*ON VISITING A HAUNT OF COLERIDGE'S.*

FROM Lynton, where the double streams  
Through forest-hung ravines made way,  
And bounded into seas late grey  
That shook with morning's earliest beams,  
I wandered on to Porlock bay ;

And thence, for love of him who sang  
His happiest songs beside their rills,  
To "seaward Quantock's heathy hills"  
Advanced, while lane and hedge-grove rang,  
And all the song-birds "had their wills."

There, like a sweet face dimmed with pain,  
The scene grew dark with mist and shower :  
Its yellow leaf the autumnal bower  
Moulded full fast ; and as the rain  
Washed the last fragrance from the flower,

I heard the blue-robed schoolboy's tongue  
 Thrilling Christ's Hospital once more  
 With mystic chaunt and antique lore,  
 While round their Bard his playmates hung,  
 Wondering, and sighed, the witchery o'er.

I saw him tread soft Devon's coombes:—  
 Ah, thence he drew that southern grace  
 Which in his song held happy place  
 Amid the shrouded northland glooms,  
 Like some strange flower of alien race.

That Bard who like a gleam, or strain  
 Of music, crossed at morn and eve  
 Those hills, who sang of Genevieve,  
 And that weird Pilgrim from the main,  
 Not less, at Truth's command, could leave

Song's sheltered haunt the heights to climb  
 Where, passing cloud and precipice,  
 Mind, throned among the seas of ice,  
 Watches from specular tower sublime  
 Far visions kenned through freezing skies,

Outlines of Thought, like hills through mist  
 That stretch athwart the Infinite  
 In dread mathesis lines of light—  
 Such Thoughts the Muse's spell resist;  
 Above her mark they wing their flight!



The songs he gave us, what were they  
But preludes to some loftier rhyme  
That would not leave the spheral chime,  
The concords of eternal Day,  
And speak itself in words of Time?

O ever famished Heart! O hands  
That still "drew nectar in a sieve!"  
At birth of thine what witch had leave  
To bind such strength in willow bands,  
The web half-woven to unweave?

Oh for those Orphic songs unheard  
That lived but in the singer's thought!  
Who sinned? Whose hand defeature wrought?  
Unworthy was the world or Bard  
To clasp those Splendors all but caught?

What Bard of all who e'er have sung  
Since that lark sang when Eve had birth,  
Song's inmost soul had uttered forth  
Like thee? from Song's asperge had flung  
Her lesser baptism o'er the earth?

The world's base Poets have not kept  
Song's vigil on her vestal height,  
Nor scorned false pride and foul delight,  
Nor with the weepers rightly wept,  
Nor seen God's visions in the night!

Profane to enthrone the Sense, and add  
A gleam that lies to shapes that pass,  
Ah me! in song as in a glass  
They might have shewn us glory-clad  
His Face Who ever is and was!

They might have shown us cloud and leaf  
Lit with the radiance uncreate;  
Love, throned o'er vanquished Lust and Hate;  
Joy, gem-distilled through rocks of Grief;  
And Justice conquering Time and Fate!

But they immodest brows have crowned  
With violated bud and flower:—  
Courting the high Muse “par amour,”  
Upon her suppliants she hath frowned,  
And sent them darkness for a dower.

Better half-sight and tear-dimmed day  
Than dust-defiled, o'er-sated Touch!  
Better the torn wing than the crutch!  
Better who hide their gift than they  
Who give so basely and so much.

Thy song was pure: thy heart was high:  
Thy genius in its strength was chaste:  
And if that genius ran to waste,  
Unblemished as its native sky  
O'er diamond rocks the river raced!

Great Bard! To thee in youth my heart  
Rushed as the maiden's to the boy,  
When love, too blithesome to be coy,  
No want forebodes and feels no smart,  
A self-less love self-brimmed with joy!

Still sporting with those amaranth leaves  
That shape for others coronals,  
I ask not on whose head it falls  
That crown the Fame Pandemian weaves—  
Thee, thee the Fame Uranian calls!

For wildered feet point thou the path  
Which mounts to where triumphant sit  
The Assumed of Earth, all human yet,  
From sun-glare safe, and tempest's wrath,  
Who sing for love; nor those forget,

The Elders crowned that, singing, fling  
Their crowns upon the Temple floor;  
Those Elders ever young, though hoar,  
Who count all praise an idle thing  
Save His who lives for evermore!

## AUTUMNAL ODE.

DEDICATED TO MY SISTER.

OCTOBER, 1867.

## I.

MINSTREL and Genius, to whose songs or sighs  
The round earth modulates her changeful sphere,  
That bend'st in shadow from yon western skies,  
And lean'st, cloud-hid, along the woodlands sere,  
Too deep thy notes—too pure—for mortal ear!  
Yet Nature hears them: without aid of thine  
How sad were her decline!  
From thee she learns with just and soft gradation  
Her dying hues in death to harmonize;  
Through thee her obsequies  
A glory wear that conquers desolation.  
Through thee she singeth, "Faithless were the  
sighing  
Breathed o'er a beauty only born to fleet:  
A holy thing and precious is the dying  
Of that whose life was innocent and sweet."  
From many a dim retreat  
Lodged on high-bosomed, echoing mountain lawn,  
Or chiming convent 'mid dark vale withdrawn,  
From cloudy shrine or rapt oracular seat  
Voices of loftier worlds that saintly strain repeat.

## II.

It is the Autumnal Epode of the year:  
The nymphs that urge the seasons on their  
round,

They to whose green lap flies the startled deer  
When bays the far off hound,  
They that drag April by the rain-bright hair,  
(Though sun-showers daze her and the rude winds  
scare)  
O'er March's frosty bound,  
They by whose warm and furtive hand unwound  
The cestus falls from May's new-wedded breast—  
Silent they stand beside dead Summer's bier,  
With folded palms, and faces to the West,  
And their loose tresses sweep the dewy ground.

## III.

A sacred stillness hangs upon the air,  
A sacred clearness. Distant shapes draw nigh :  
Glistens yon Elm-grove, to its heart laid bare,  
And all articulate in its symmetry,  
With here and there a branch that from on high  
Far flashes washed as in a watery gleam :  
Beyond, the glossy lake lies calm—a beam  
Upheaved, as if in sleep, from its slow central  
stream.

## IV.

This quiet—is it Truth, or some fair mask ?  
Is pain no more ? Shall Sleep be lord, not  
Death ?  
Shall sickness cease to afflict and overtask  
The spent and laboring breath ?

Is there 'mid all yon farms and fields, this day,  
No grey old head that drops? No darkening eye?  
Spirits of Pity, lift your hands, and pray—  
Each hour, alas, men die!

## V.

The love songs of the Blackbird now are done:  
Upon the o'ergrown, loose, red-berried cover  
The latest of late warblers sings as one  
That trolls at random when the feast is over:  
From bush to bush the dusk-bright cobwebs hover,  
Silvering the dried-up rill's exhausted urn;  
No breeze is fluting o'er the green morass:  
Nor falls the thistle-down: in deep-drenched grass,  
Now blue, now red, the shifting dew-gems burn.

## VI.

Mine ear thus torpid held, methinks mine eye  
Is armed the more with visionary power:  
As with a magnet's force each redd'ning bower  
Compels me through the woodland pageantry:  
Slowly I track the forest's skirt: emerging,  
Slowly I climb from pastoral steep to steep:  
I see far mists from reedy valleys surging:  
I follow the procession of white sheep  
That fringe with wool old stock and ruined rath,  
How staid to-day, how eager when the lambs  
Went leaping round their dams!  
I cross the leaf-choked stream from stone to stone,  
Pass the hoar ash tree, trace the upland path,  
The furze-brake that in March all golden shone  
Reflected in the shy kingfisher's bath.

## VII.

No more from full-leaved woods that music swells

Which in the summer filled the satiate ear :

A fostering sweetness still from bosky dells

Murmurs ; but I can hear

A harsher sound when down, at intervals,

The dry leaf rattling falls.

Dark as those spots which herald swift disease

The death-blot marks for death the leaf yet firm :

Beside the leaf down-trodden trails the worm :

In forest depths the haggard, whitening grass

Repines at youth departed. Half-stripped trees

Reveal, as one who says, "Thou too must pass,"

Plainlier each day their quaint anatomies.

Yon Poplar grove is troubled ! Bright and bold

Babbled his cold leaves in the July breeze

As though above our heads a runnel rolled :

His mirth is o'er : subdued by old October

He counts his lessening wealth, and, sadly sober,

Tinkles his minute tablets of wan gold.

## VIII.

Be still, ye sighs of the expiring year !

A sword there is :—ye play but with the sheath !

Whispers there are more piercing, yet more dear

Than yours, that come to me those boughs beneath ;

And well-remembered footsteps known of old

Tread soft the mildewed mould.

O magic memory of the things that were—

Of those whose hands our childish locks carest,

Of one so angel-like in tender care,  
Of one in majesty so God-like drest—  
O phantom faces painted on the air  
Of friend or sudden guest;—  
I plead in vain:  
The woods revere, but cannot heal my pain.  
Ye sheddings from the Yew tree and the Pine,  
If on your rich and aromatic dust  
I laid my forehead, and my hands put forth  
In the last beam that warms the forest floor,  
No answer to my yearnings would be mine,  
To me no answer through those branches hoar  
Would reach in noontide trance or moony gust!  
Her secret Heaven would keep, and mother  
Earth  
Speak from her deep heart—"Where thou know'st  
not, trust!"

## IX.

That pang is past. Once more my pulses keep  
A tenor calm, that knows nor grief nor joy;  
Once more I move as one that died in sleep,  
And treads, a Spirit, the haunts he trod, a boy,  
And sees them like-unlike, and sees beyond:  
Then earthly life comes back, and I despond.  
Ah life, not life! Dim woods of crimsoned beech  
That swathe the hills in sacerdotal stoles,  
Burn on, burn on! the year ere long will reach  
That day made holy to Departed Souls,  
The day whereon man's heart, itself a priest,  
Descending to that Empire pale wherein



Beauty and Sorrow dwell, but pure from Sin,  
Holds with God's Church at once its fast and feast.  
Dim woods, they, they alone your vaults should  
tread,

The sad and saintly Dead !

Your pathos those alone ungrieved could meet

Who fit them for the Beatific Vision :

The things that as they pass us seem to cheat,

To them would be a music-winged fruition,

A cadence sweetest in the soft subsiding :

Transience to them were dear ;—for theirs the  
abiding—

Dear as that Pain which clears from fleshly film

The spirit's eye, matures each spirit-germ,

Frost-bound on earth, but at the appointed term

Mirror of Godhead in the immortal realm.

x.

Lo there the regal exiles !—under shades

Deeper than ours, yet in a finer air—

Climbing, successive, elders, youths, and maids,

The penitential mountain's ebon stair :

The earth-shadow clips that halo round their hair :

And as lone outcasts watch a moon that wanes,

Receding slowly o'er their native plains,

Thus watch they, wistful, something far but fair.

Serene they stand, and wait,

Self-exiled by the ever-open gate :

Awhile self-exiled from the All-pitying Eyes,

Lest mortal stain should blot their Paradise.

Silent they pace, ascending high and higher  
The hills of God, a hand on every heart  
That willing burns, a vase of cleansing fire  
Fed by God's love in souls from God apart.  
Each lifted face with thirst of long desire  
Is pale; but o'er it grows a mystic sheen,  
Because on them God's face, by them unseen,  
Is turned, through narrowing darkness hourly nigher.

## XI.

Sad thoughts, why roam ye thus in your unrest  
The bourne unseen? Why scorn our mortal bound?  
Is it not kindly, Earth's maternal breast?  
Is it not fair, her head with vine-wreaths  
crowned?  
Farm-yard and barn are heaped with golden store;  
High piled the sheaves illumine the russet plain;  
Hedges and hedge-row trees are yellowed o'er  
With waifs and trophies of the laboring wain:  
Why murmur, "Change is change, when down-  
ward ranging;  
Spring's upward change but pointed to the un-  
changing?"  
Yet, O how just your sorrow, if ye knew  
The true grief's sanction true!  
'Tis not the thought of parting youth that moves us;  
'Tis not alone the pang for friends departed:  
The Autumnal pain that raises while it proves us  
Wells from a holier source and deeper-hearted!  
For this a sadness swells above our mirth;  
For this a bitter runs beneath the sweetness;

The throne that shakes not is the Spirit's  
right;

The heart and hope of Man are infinite;  
Heaven is his home, and, exiled here on earth,  
Completion most betrays the incompleteness!

## XII.

Heaven is his home.—But hark! the breeze increases:  
The sunset forests, catching sudden fire,  
Flash, swell, and sing, a million-organed choir:  
Roofing the West, rich clouds in glittering fleeces  
O'er-arch ethereal spaces and divine  
Of heaven's clear hyaline.

No dream is this! Beyond that radiance golden  
God's Sons I see, His armies bright and strong,  
The ensanguined Martyrs here with palms high  
holden,

The Virgins there, a lily-lifting throng!  
The Splendors nearer draw. In choral blending  
The Prophets' and the Apostles' chaunt I hear;  
I see the City of the Just descending  
With gates of pearl and diamond bastions sheer.  
The walls are agate and chalcedony:  
On jacinth street and jasper parapet  
The unwaning light is light of Deity,  
Not beam of lessening moon or suns that set.  
That undeciduous forestry of spires  
Lets fall no leaf! those lights can never range:  
Saintly fruitions and divine desires  
Are blended there in rapture without change.

—Man was not made for things that leave us,  
For that which goeth and returneth,  
For hopes that lift us yet deceive us,  
For love that wears a smile yet mourneth;  
Not for fresh forests from the dead leaves spring-  
ing,  
The cyclic re-creation which, at best,  
Yields us—betrayal still to promise clinging—  
But tremulous shadows of the realm of rest:  
For things immortal Man was made,  
God's Image, latest from His hand,  
Co-heir with Him, Who in Man's flesh arrayed  
Holds o'er the worlds the Heavenly-Human wand:  
His portion this—sublime  
To stand where access none hath Space or Time,  
Above the starry host, the Cherub band,  
To stand—to advance—and after all to stand!

**Dedicated**

TO

THE COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT.



## URBS ROMA.

## ST. PETER'S BY MOONLIGHT.

Low hung the moon when first I stood in Rome :  
Midway she seemed attracted from her sphere,  
On those twin Fountains shining broad and clear  
Whose floods, not mindless of their mountain home,  
Rise there in clouds of rainbow mist and foam.  
That hour fulfilled the dream of many a year :  
Through that thin mist, with joy akin to fear,  
The steps I saw, the pillars, last the dome.  
A spiritual Empire there embodied stood :  
The Roman Church there met me face to face :  
Ages, sealed up, of evil and of good  
Slept in that circling colonnade's embrace.  
Alone I stood, a stranger and alone,  
Changed by that stony miracle to stone.

## PONTIFIC MASS IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

FORTH from their latticed and mysterious cells  
The harmonies are spreading, onward rolled :  
Ere long, by counter tides met and controlled,  
Midway more high the gathering tumult swells.  
It sinks—a breeze the incense cloud dispels :—  
Once more Sibylline forms, and Prophets stoled  
Look down, supreme of Art's high miracles,  
Upon the Church terrene. Once more, behold,  
With what an awful majesty of mien

The Kingly Priest, his holy precincts rounding,  
Tramples the marbles of the sacred scene :—  
The altar now he nears, and now the throne ;  
As though the Law were folded in his zone,  
And all the Prophets in his skirts were sounding.

#### THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

DEGRADING Art's augustest minist'rings,  
Yon Pillar soars, with sculptured forms embost,  
Whose grace at that ambitious height is lost :  
Lo ! as the stony serpent twines its rings  
Priests, coursers, heralds, warriors, slaves, and kings,  
Mingle, a tortuous mass confused and crost ;  
While Art, least honored here where flattered most,  
Deplores in vain her prostituted springs,  
By a fallen Angel at their source ill-stirred ;  
Unholy—thence unhealing !—What is aid,  
Vouchsafed, upon conditions that degrade,  
To one who her allegiance hath transferred ?—  
O Attic Art brought low, that here dost stand  
Full-fed, but hooded, on a tyrant's hand !

#### THE ARCH OF TITUS.

I STOOD beneath the Arch of Titus long ;  
On Hebrew forms there sculptured long I pored ;  
Till fancy, by a distant clarion stung,  
Woke : and methought there moved that arch toward



A Roman Triumph. Lance and helm and sword  
Glittered ; white coursers tramped, and trumpets  
rung :

Last came, car-borne a captive horde among,  
The laurelled Boast of Rome—her destined Lord.  
As though by wings of unseen eagles fanned  
The Conqueror's cheek, when first that Arch he saw,  
Burned with the flush he strove in vain to quell—  
Titus ! a loftier arch than thine hath spanned  
Rome and the world with empery and law ;—  
Thereof each stone was hewn from Israel !

THE CAMPAGNA SEEN FROM ST. JOHN LATERAN.

WAS it the trampling of triumphant hosts  
That levelled thus yon plain, sea-like and hoary ;  
Armies from Rome sent forth to distant coasts,  
And back returning clad with spoils of glory ?  
Around it loom cape, ridge, and promontory :  
Above it sunset shadows fleet like ghosts,  
Fast-borne o'er keep and tomb, whose ancient boasts,  
By Time confuted, name have none in story.  
Fit seat for Rome ! for here is ample space,  
Which greatness chiefly needs—severed alone  
By yonder aqueducts, with queenly grace  
That sweep in curves concentric ever on,  
(Bridging a world subjected as a chart)  
To that great City, head of earth, and heart.

## BIRDS IN THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN.

EGERIAN warbler ! unseen rhapsodist !  
Whose carols antedate the Roman spring ;  
Who, while the old grey walls, thy playmates, ring,  
Dost evermore on one deep strain insist ;  
Flinging thy bell-notes through the sunset mist !  
Around thy haunt rich weeds and wall-flowers swing  
As in a breeze, the twilight crimsoning  
That sucks from them ærial amethyst—  
O for a Sibyl's insight to reveal  
That lore thou sing'st of ! Shall I guess it ? nay !  
Enough to hear thy strain—enough to feel  
O'er all the extended soul the freshness steal  
Of those ambrosial honeydews that weigh  
Down with sweet force the azure lids of day.

## THE "MISERERE" IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

## I.

FROM sadness on to sadness, woe to woe,  
Searching all depths of grief ineffable,  
Those sighs of the Forsaken sink and swell,  
And to a piercing shrillness, gathering, grow.  
Now one by one, commingling now, they flow :  
Now in the dark they die, a piteous knell,  
Lorn as the wail of exiled Israel,  
Or Hagar weeping o'er her outcast. No—  
Never hath loss external forced such sighs !  
O ye with secret sins that inly bleed,

And drift from God, search out, if ye are wise,  
Your unrepented infelicities :  
And pray, whate'er the punishment decreed,  
It prove not exile from your Maker's eyes !

THE "MISERERE" IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

II.

THOSE sounds expiring on mine ear, mine eye  
Was by their visual reflex strangely spelled :  
A vision of the Angels who rebelled  
Still hung before me, through the yielding sky  
Sinking on plumes outstretched imploringly.  
Their Tempter's hopes and theirs for ever quelled,  
They sank, with hands upon their eyes close-held,  
And longed, methought, for death, yet could not die.  
Down, ever down, a mournful pageant streaming  
Like Souls in whom Despair hath slain Endeavor,  
Inwoven choirs to ruin blindly tending,  
They sank. I wept as one who weeps while dream-  
ing,  
To see them, host on host, by doom descending  
Down the dim gulfs, for ever and for ever.

A ROMAN LEGEND.—VALERIAN AND CECILIA.

THE eyes that loved me were upon me staying :  
The eyes that loved me, and the eyes that won.  
Guardian or guide celestial saw I none ;  
But the unseen chaplets on her temples weighing

Breathed heaven around ! A golden smile was  
playing

O'er the full lips. Meekly her countenance shone,  
And beamed, a lamp of peace, 'mid shadows dun—  
Round her lit form the ambrosial locks were sway-  
ing.

Fair Spirit ! Angel of delight new-born,  
And love, unchanging love and infinite,  
Aureorean planet of the eternal morn !  
That gaze I caught ; and, standing in that light,  
My soul, from Pagan bonds released by thee,  
Upsoared, and hailed its immortality.

#### ROME AT NOON.

THE streets lie silent, in the shadows deep  
Of obelisk and statue o'er them thrown ;  
A people slumbers in its noonday sleep ;  
No sound save yon cicala's lazy drone.  
Sunshine intense each glittering dome doth steep,  
Each Lombard tower, each convent court grass-  
grown,  
Fires the tall arch, and heats each column prone,  
My prop in turn as slowly on I creep.  
Methinks such stillness reigned that hour in Rome  
Three centuries since, when through the fiery air  
Uprose, sole-heard, the saintly Pontiff's prayer—  
Rose, and a slumbering world escaped its doom.  
Vanquished that hour beside Lepanto's shore,  
Satan like lightning fell, thenceforth to rise no more.

## CHRISTMAS EVE, 1860.

THIS night, O earth, a Saviour germinate:  
Drop down, ye heavens, your sweetness from above !  
This night is closed the iron book of fate ;  
Open'd this night the book of endless love.  
On from the Orient like a breeze doth move  
The joy world-wide—a breeze that wafts a freight  
Of vernal song o'er lands benumb'd but late,  
Rivers ice-bound, and winter-wasted grove.  
Onward from Bethlehem, onward o'er the Ægean,  
Travels like night the starry Feast Divine.  
All realms rejoice ; but loudest swells the pean  
From that white Basilic on the Esquiline  
Beneath whose roof in sunlike radiance clad  
The suffering Father stands—to-night not sad.

## THE CATACOMBS.

WHOEVER seeks for penitential days,  
And vows that fitly on such days attend,  
A region apt, his wanderings here may end :  
These caverns, winding in sepulchral maze,  
Are stronger than the desert's loneliest ways  
Thoughts meek and sad with lofty thoughts to  
blend :—

Descend, great Pontiff! Sovran Priest, descend !  
Let all the Princes of the Church upraise  
With annual rites their sceptred hands to God !  
Kings of the nations, purpling those strange glooms

With robes imperial, on your faces sink ;—  
Sink, and be saved, in those dread catacombs !  
And deeply of the inspiring incense drink  
That rises from the dust the Martyrs trod !

#### THE APPIAN WAY.

AWE-STRUCK I gazed upon that rock-paved way,  
The Appian Road ; marmorean witness still  
Of Rome's resistless stride and fateful Will,  
Which mocked at limits, opening out for aye  
Divergent paths to 'one imperial sway.  
The Nations verily their parts fulfil ;  
And War must plough the fields which Law shall  
till ;  
Therefore Rome triumphed till the appointed day.  
Then from the Catacombs, like waves, up-burst  
The Host of God, and scaled, as in an hour,  
O'er all the earth the mountain seats of Power.  
Gladly in that baptismal flood immersed  
The old Empire died to live. Once more on high  
It sits ; now clothed with immortality !

#### ON THE CROSS IN THE INTERIOR OF THE COLISEUM.

FAR from his friends, his country, and his home,  
Perhaps on that small spot—ay doubtless there—  
Some Christian Martyr fell, in one wide stare  
Concentrating the gaze intense of Rome.

Now central stands beneath heaven's mighty dome  
The Cross which marks that spot! Stranger, be-  
ware!

The Orb of Earth was framed that Cross to bear:  
And when, slow-tottering round an Empire's tomb,  
These walls, within whose grey encincture vast  
That Cross for ages stands as in a shrine,  
Around their awful guest shall melt at last,  
Each stone descending to the earth, shall say,  
"Empires and Nations crumble: but that Sign  
Pre-eminent shall stand, and stand for aye!"

#### THE FOUNTAIN OF EGERIA.

FOR this cold fount the Sabine Saint and Sage  
Woody by high thought forsook both camp and  
throne:

Here on his country's weal he mused alone,  
Calm-visaged as the planetary page:  
That murmuring spring had power his cares to  
assuage:

Here—dim elsewhere as noontide moon fleece-strewn—  
In this religious gloom distinctly shewn,  
Egeria shared his kingly hermitage.  
O pure as Arethusa, and more high!  
Cleaving rough seas she spurned irreverent love;  
Thine, Roman Nymph, a tenderer sanctity,  
Bending like air that strong white head above  
To breathe just counsel in a monarch's ear—  
Those kings alone are blest to whom thy voice is  
dear!



THE MONASTERY OF SAN GREGORIO ON THE CÆLIAN  
HILL.

As when, descending from that God-led bark  
At last on Ararat's broad summit staged,  
A ruined earth's sad heir, yet undismayed,  
Forth paced, with all his sons, the Patriarch ;—  
As when above that world of waters stark  
He stood, while down they rushed, and standing  
prayed :—  
As when he followed, through some wave-worn  
glade  
With over-arching horns of granite dark,  
Advancing without fear he knew not where—  
So with his monks went forth from yonder pile  
Augustine missioned to that northern isle ;  
Yon Cælian Hill descended thus, footbare ;  
Thus sought a wilderness of hearts all stone ;  
Thus found a land of death, and made that land  
his own.

THE GRAVES OF TYRCONNEL AND TYRONE ON SAN  
PIETRO, IN MONTORIO.

WITHIN Saint Peter's fane, that kindly hearth  
Where exiles crowned their earthly loads down cast,  
The Scottish Kings repose, their wanderings past,  
In death more royal thrice than in their birth.  
Near them, within a church of narrower girth  
But with dilated memories yet more vast,



Sad Ulster's Princes find their rest at last,  
 Their home the holiest spot, save one, on earth.  
 This is that Mount which saw Saint Peter die!  
 Where stands yon dome stood once that Cross  
     reversed:

From this dread Hill, a Western Calvary,  
 The Empire and that Synagogue accurst  
 Clashed two ensanguined hands—like Cain—in one.  
 Sleep where the Apostle slept, Tyrconnel and Tyrone!

## SONNET.

THE FRANCISCAN CONVENT OF THE ARA CÆLI ON THE  
     CAPITOL.

HERE where of old the Roman Senate sate  
 Where, thundering from his Capitolian throne,  
 Co-regent of the Universal State,  
 Jove o'er that Roman sceptre laid his own,  
 To-day the sons of Francis, humbly elate,  
 Keep their aerial nest and vigil lone;  
 Here, like that bird which "sings at heaven's gate,"  
 Earliest their Christmas Matin Hymns entone.  
 Far down, beneath, the Benedictines lie,  
 Of Orders first;—far down whose Science soared  
 Highest;\*—far down the all-conquering Company†  
 That raised o'er earth the chalice and the sword:—  
 But here the meek Franciscans reign on high  
 That Christ may be in lowliness adored.

\* The Dominican Order.

† The Company of Jesus.

## THE CONVENT OF ST. BUONAVENTURA.

EMBALMED airs, so pure, so fresh, so bland!  
Heart-soothing love-note of the dove unseen!  
Can such be here? Beyond that leafy screen  
Thy ruins, dread Cæsarian Palace, stand!  
There, full in face thy cliff-like walls expand,  
Man-slaying Coliseum! Tragic scene,  
Where, lion-girt, the Martyr stood serene,  
And triumphed that strong Faith an Empire banned.  
O Rome, thou mystic name for Strength, that hour  
Thou knew'st not Strength is none on earth save  
Love!\*

They knew it, they that, met in yonder bower,  
Of Rome spake not, but that fair realm above  
Where those who loved and suffered, love and  
reign—  
Saint Francis, and that warrior Saint of Spain.

## SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE.

As stand the Hills around Jerusalem,  
As stands the Lord of Hosts around His own,  
So stand beside the gates and walls that hem  
The Christian Salem with their stony zone  
The Seven Basilicas: so stands their gem,  
Saint Mary's snowy fane, thy tribute throne,

\* "Roma," which signifies Strength, is "Amor," with the letters placed in an inverted order.

O Esquiline, in legends old snow-strewn,  
 Upreared to her that wears earth's diadem !  
 Reign, chaste and meek ; reign, blissful and benign ;  
 Reign, second Eve, that mortal taint hadst none :  
 Reign, Maid and Mother of the Child Divine,  
 For His, not thine, the kingdom thou hast won :  
 Reign in thy Rome—thy Son's augustest shrine—  
 And bind her ever closer to that Son !

#### THE INTERIOR OF ST. PETER'S.

REBELLIOUS Nations ! This shall come to pass—  
 From yonder altar to their kingdoms down  
 The Kings once more shall pace, sceptre and crown  
 On that dim sea of marble and of brass,  
 Showering, as Angels on the sea of glass,  
 Their amaranthine wreaths ! All Powers shall own  
 A spiritual homage to St. Peter's throne ;  
 Draw thence once more their temporal peace. Alas !  
 What now are Kings ? A thousand years each  
 Nation

Claimed to stand subject to a Father's eye !  
 All realms invoked the Apostle's arbitration,  
 An unseen world their strength and unity :—  
 Proud Kings ! proud realms ! your victory is your  
 loss !

That rule is brief which rests not on the Cross.

## THE MONUMENT OF ST. LEO THE GREAT.

(ATTILA BEFORE ROME.)

LEAGUERING doomed walls—as when on some wild  
coast

The high-ridged deep, storm-driven from afar,  
Makes way in thunder, whitening reef and bar—  
Leaguering great Rome, the old world's shame yet  
boast,

Comes up at last the dread Barbarian host :  
To meet them, placid as that ocean star  
Whose rising quells the elemental war,  
Forth moves, his hands upon his bosom crossed,  
That Puissance new, the Church's mitred Sire !  
His eye is fixed : as reeds before the breeze  
Bending, that host sinks down on suppliant knees :  
The standards droop : the trumpet blasts expire :  
The "Scourge of God" in heaven his sentence sees ;  
The embattled Gentiles tremble, and retire.

THE MONUMENTS OF QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN  
AND THE COUNTESS MATILDA.

THIS is the crownless Queen of royal heart ;  
The Christian Queen that, vowed to Christ, laid  
down

The infected sceptre and the apostate crown,  
Zealous with that dear Lord to bear her part  
Whom the blind North was "adverse to desert."

To her what thing was Fortune's smile or frown,  
Fortune that stoles the knave, and thrones the clown,  
Whose Church the palace is, whose Realm the mart?  
Christina, and Matilda! Here they lie!  
One spurned a kingdom: dying, one endowed  
The meek one with the trappings of the proud,  
And fixed her realm, a glittering gem, on high,  
Star of that temporal crown by Peter worn—  
Sleep well, brave sisters, till the eternal morn!

## SIR WALTER SCOTT AT THE TOMB OF THE STUARTS.

## I.

THE wild deer, when the shaft is in his side,  
Seeks his first lair beneath the forest hoar:  
Drawn back from reboant deeps, the exhausted tide  
Breathes his last sob on the forsaken shore:  
When on the village green the sports have died  
The child stands knocking at his Grandsire's door:  
So stands by this far tomb of Scotland's pride  
Her greatest son, death-doomed, and travel-sore.  
So stand, last Singer of the Heroic Age!  
Dead are those years so loyal, brave, and high,  
That whilome blazoned History's Missal page,  
And ring for aye through thy glad minstrelsy:  
Old Pilgrim, ended is thy pilgrimag  
This hour. The shadows round thee close: now  
die!

## II.

Staff-propt he stands: and all his Country's past  
Streams back before his sadly-kindling eye;  
King after King, as cloud on cloud, when fast  
The storm-rack rushes through the autumnal sky:  
Aughrim to Flodden answers! on the blast  
Now Mary's, now the Bruce's standards fly:  
Those earliest, Irish, kings he sees at last  
Cross-crowned on old Iona's shores who lie.  
—Thus as he gazed, a voice from vault and shrine  
Whispered around him—and from Peter's Tomb—  
“Not one alone, but every Royal Line  
To my strong Gates, as thou to these, shall come,  
Heart-pierced at last; for mine they were; and  
mine  
The Cradles and the Graves of Christendom.”

## SAINT PETER.

## I.

Rock of the Rock! As He, the Light of Light,  
Shews forth His Father's Glory evermore,  
So shew'st thou forth the Son's unshaken Might,  
Throned in thy unity on every shore.  
On thee His Church He built: and though, all night,  
Tempests of leaguering demons round it roar,  
The Gates of Hell prevail not; and the Right  
Shines lordliest through the breaking clouds of war.

Prince of the Apostles ! Onward like a wheel  
The world rolls blindly, and the nations pant ;  
But God upon His Church hath set His seal,  
Fusing His own eternal adamant  
Through all its bastions and its towers in thee—  
Luminous it stands through thy solidity.

## SAINT PETER.

## II.

First of the Faith he made confession sole,  
Taught by the Father, not by flesh and blood :  
Then He the parts Who strengthens by the whole  
Bade him make strong his Brethren, and the rod  
Gave him of empire. By that Syrian flood  
Lastly, a Love thrice-challenged he confessed  
That singly passed the love of all the rest,  
And straightway to his hand Incarnate God,  
Lifting that Hand which made the worlds, accorded  
Rule of His Flock world-wide both fair and pure :  
The mystery of His Might in One He hoarded  
That all, made one, might live in one secure.  
In Christ the \*Race redeemed is one :—in thee  
Forth stands, a Sacrament, that Unity.

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